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THE COMMUNITY CHURCH

A PROBABLE METHOD OF APPROACH TO AND BASES FOR DENOMINATIONAL UNITY

By

ALBERT CLAY ZUMBRUNNEN

3015

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

FOREWORD 1

CHAPTER

I. DENOMINATIONALISM IN THE UNITED STATES AND SOME OF ITS RESULTS 5

II. SOME OF THE CAUSES FOR THE TREND TOWARD DENOMINATIONAL UNITY. 28

III. SOME CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF THE TREND TOWARD DENOMINATIONAL UNITY SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY 41

IV. THE COMMUNITY CHURCH—A DEFINITION . . . 54

V. TYPES OF COMMUNITY CHURCHES. 80

VI. ACTIVITIES OF COMMUNITY CHURCHES. . . . 98

VII. THE COMMUNITY CHURCH AND DENOMINATIONAL UNITY. 120

VIII. HOW THE COMMUNITY CHURCH BRINGS ABOUT DENOMINATIONAL UNITY 128

IX. THE METHOD AND BASIS OF UNITY FOUND IN THE COMMUNITY CHURCH ARE A PROBABLE METHOD AND BASIS FOR DENOMINATIONAL UNITY 138

APPENDIX A. LOCATION OF COMMUNITY CHURCHES . . 145

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY 147

INDEX 155

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FOREWORD

This study of the community church considers one of the vital and most important problems confronting the church today, i.e., that of denominational unity.[1] This problem is not new, having been before the church for some centuries. Some incidents in connection with the recent war brought this problem into the ascendancy and made it necessary for the church to consider it anew.

American society is passing through a tremendous social revolution. Many significant changes are taking place. Among them are the increasing urbanization of population; co-operative organization among farmers; widespread organization of labor; the movement for profit-sharing in business and the democratization of industry; the enfranchisement of women; their entrance into the professions of industry; the increase of divorce; the increase of government supervision and control of industries and public utilities; the growth of the spirit of internationalism; and the changing point of view of the church from individual to social salvation. So far-reaching has this revolution been, so great have been the changes in connection with the war, that all the social institutions which have survived are compelled to consider themselves anew in relation to the present existing social situation and that of the future.

[1] By denominational unity in this study is meant not unity between different factors of a particular denomination itself or "unity of spirit" without organic unity in the various denominations, but the actual unity of the various denominations into one body.

Institutions find themselves compelled to re-examine their principles, purposes, and methods of functioning. They find themselves confronted with the fact that they must stand the test which the present situation is requiring of all social institutions, viz., whether they have potential adaptability for adjusting themselves to the new conditions; whether they are functioning in such a way as to be of value to human society; and whether their functioning is effective, efficient, and economical.

The church is one of the institutions confronted with this demand. It, with other institutions, is seeking to adjust itself and meet the demands. This is evident from the large number of church conferences that are being held, the investigations that are being made, the great constructive programs that are being formulated, and the reorganization that the church is undertaking in order to carry out these programs.

This study does not consider all the new problems confronting the church. It is primarily concerned with the one mentioned above, viz., the problem of the unity of the various religious denominations. In it are involved the things that have been pointed out that are presenting themselves to the various other social institutions, i.e., adaptation to the new social situation so as to meet its needs and to function most economically and efficiently. The study first considers in a rather cursory way the denominational situation in this country and its results—the movement for denominational unity, its causes, and some of the things that show a trend in that direction. This is done in order to give the proper setting and to present the background for the more extended study of the community church, the new

expression of the movement for denominational unity. The remainder of the study is concerned with the origin, types, and activities of community churches; how they seek to adapt themselves to existing conditions; the fact that denominational unity exists in them; how they bring this unity about; and the fact that in this newly evolving type of church is to be found a probable method of approach to, and a basis of reaching, denominational unity.

CHAPTER I

DENOMINATIONALISM IN THE UNITED STATES AND SOME OF ITS RESULTS

No attempt will be made here to present the subject of denominationalism in an exhaustive manner. The cause for its rise and its development have been given comprehensive consideration by others. The various steps in the process from the church of one faith in the apostolic days to the present time in which we find "160 different types of faith"[1] and "201 denominations with the process of division still going on"[2] have likewise been sought out and set forth by others. The same is true respecting its fundamental principles. Therefore, it is not necessary to consider them here. It is the purpose of this chapter to review in a very summary manner the denominational situation in this country and some of its attendant results.

The struggle for individuality of thought and freedom of expression and the Puritan spirit of independence, which would not receive its religious sanctions from authority, or allow the fettering of its soul-liberty by the shackels of state, were transplanted to America from England and the Continent. The Pilgrims, the Quakers, the Dutch and the Huguenots, the German and Scandinavian, each brought a persuasion of the church as the abode of spiritual liberty, and established worship and

[1] *Year Book of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America* (1918), p. 173.

[2] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, IV, 7.

declared doctrines and practices consonant with this great affirmation. America proved fallow soil for denominationalism, and the original denominations have been prolific in producing subdivisions. For instance, the Lutheran church in this country has 21 subdivisions varying in size from the "Jehovah Conference" of 831 members to the "Synodical Conference" of 777,438, and all totaling 2,463,265.[1] Moveover, many new denominations, in addition to those transplanted to this country, have sprung up spontaneously. To just what extent denominational division has gone, and the resulting consequences, will here be set forth, at least in part.

One of the results worthy of consideration is a divided church. Primarily, the church is divided into two great sections or divisions, the Catholic and the Protestant, the former totaling 15,742,262 members and the latter 26,302,112.[2] Each of these great divisions is again subdivided. The former is divided into three groups with minor subdivisions, the latter into several major groups some of which have many minor subdivisions, and many other independent minor groups. Among the major Protestant groups there are six that have a total membership of over 1,000,000 each. They are as follows:[3]

Denomination	Bodies	Communicants
Methodist	16	7,608,284
Baptist	15	6,534,132
Lutheran	21	2,454,334
Presbyterian	12	2,171,601
Disciples	2	1,337,450
Protestant Episcopal	2	1,078,435

[1] *Year Book of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America* (1918), p. 180. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *The American Year Book*, 1917.

Some of the minor denominations have only a few hundred members, such as the Church of the Messianic Message with a membership of 266, and the Jacobite Church, Assyrian, of 748.

The above clearly reveals the fact that the church is divided. It has been said in this respect: "Truly the seamless robe of Christ has been rent into countless pieces, and not by the hands of pagan Roman soldiers, but by Christians themselves."[1] Another has said: "Protestantism is divided and subdivided until it cannot count its own disjecta members—hundreds of little sects, so absurd in numbers, doctrine and practice that they are a byword and a contempt."[2]

Not only has the foregoing been the result of denominationalism, but it has resulted, moreover, in an overlapping of these denominations and of overchurching in many communities. This is to be found alike in the open country, small towns, and large cities. Evidence on this point is abundant and overwhelming. Surveys have been made in many states widely separated, showing that these are not characteristics peculiar to any part of the country, but common to all sections of it. The author found specific citations of many instances in books and periodicals. Others have come under his personal observation. A few of the many examples follow.

In a rural community in Juanita County, Pennsylvania, there are eight churches in a community of 662 people, or eighty-three persons to a church.[3] In another

[1] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, IV, 9.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Anna B. Taft, *Community Study for Country Districts.*

section of the same state, a farming region, there are twenty-four country churches within a radius of four miles from a given point; within a three-mile radius from a point half a mile farther on there are sixteen country churches.

Of this situation it has been said: "Of course this is an impossible social situation: whatever be its doctrinal value, it is a form of social inefficiency."[1]

The following is descriptive of the situation in Massachusetts in respect to overlapping:

> Where should consolidation be made? We reply: Wherever two or more churches drawing from a population, which could attend either, find that separately they are unable to maintain their work on a scale required by the conditions of the community, or that they inevitably compete so that they cannot grow except at the expense of each other.
>
> Such is the condition of a large proportion of our smaller communities. In one entire county we found that there is actually one church for every 295 inhabitants. So obvious is the need that in a score of places, during the past year, the question of consolidation has been raised locally.[2]

At Dover, Kansas, with a population of 200, there are three churches with three different ministers, one giving all and the other two half of their time. In Cowgill, Missouri, the author's home town for a number of years, a village of less than 500 people, there were at one time five churches: a Baptist, Disciples of Christ, Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal South, and Presbyterian.

Another case of overlapping is set forth as follows:

> In a territory approximately eleven miles square boasting but one village and that of fewer than 700 people, no less than

[1] Charles L. Cole, *Survey*, XXXI, 327–28.

[2] Bulletin No. 1, New Series, Massachusetts Federation of Churches.

twenty-four churches representing eleven denominations were built. And as is too often true, no small part of their energy was spent in sectarian contention resulting largely in a struggle for individual church supremacy. The program of the four churches in the village was typical of nearly all twenty-four. By means foul or fair, by peace or contention, to build members in the church membership for the church's sake was the object and end of so-called Christian Labor.[1]

Overchurching in California has been described in this manner:

We are cursed with the overchurching of small towns, 520 people need five churches, 416 need four churches, 21 require two churches, 212 people are cursed with four churches, while 37 require two churches to minister to their peculiar needs. It requires seventeen churches to minister to these 1,400 people all in one county. Of these seventeen churches three are in a way self-supporting and yet each of these requires that their pastor secure some of his wages from other fields, and were it not for this every church in the district would be on the Missionary Societies of the different denominations, cursed by a narrow sectarianism that would damn the world if it is not to be saved in some set way.[2]

In the state of New York, the following instances of overchurching have been reported:

In the hamlet of S. are a Methodist Church of 32 members, an Episcopal of 23 and a Universalist of 17. The village of C. supports two Baptist organizations and three Methodists, totaling 227 Communicants. In the town of W. are three folds of combined membership of 53. In thirty-five towns of adjoining counties, there are fifty-two churches with not over fifty communicants each, while three report a membership respectively of 9, 8, and 5. It has been said of the foregoing situation that the conclusion is irresistible. In these four counties the churches generally are

[1] Charles L. Cole, *loc. cit.*

[2] *Rural Manhood*, VIII, 221–22.

small. Most of the fifty-two should cease to be, after having thrown their weight where it would do the most good.[1]

A minister recently reported in a conference at Chicago that the first charge he had after leaving seminary was in a certain Wisconsin town of 1,500 people in which there were nine different churches representative of as many denominations. In Blair, Nebraska, with a population of 2,500, there are twelve church buildings and two other religious organizations that do not have buildings.[2]

Another citation of overlapping is set forth as follows:

> This religious information as obtained in Bellville, a quiet representative Kansas county seat town with a population of 2,300 people, may be regarded as typical of communities of this size in the west. In the first place, the study shows that there are too many church organizations. There are nine organizations, six of which have buildings and five have regular services. In the six church plants the community has invested $38,316 and is paying annually to its ministers a total of $5,040, with total current expenses of $9,932. This expenditure of $40,000 in buildings and equipment and the annual outlay of $10,000 indicate a generous investment and should yield good returns.[3]

The results of this "generous investment" were an average attendance of 597 at all churches on Sunday mornings, or 25 per cent of the population, and that only 49 per cent of it were members of the church.

Another typical instance is that of a small western city of 1,347 inhabitants. It has eight different denominations and seven church buildings, Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, and Episcopal, to the value of $21,300,

[1] Fred W. Palmer, *Biblothaca Sacra*, LXXIV, 460.

[2] Roy B. Guild, *Rural Manhood*, October, 1916.

[3] Ernest W. Burgess, *Rural Manhood*, January, 1918.

of which $3,450 was subscribed by mission boards. Of this amount, $8,400 lies absolutely idle and worthless. Three of the churches, Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist, were erected before 1880, at which time the American population numbered only 420 persons.[1]

A survey made in a rural section of a part of Ohio that included 1,200 townships revealed some striking examples of overchurching. The average population of these townships was 1,470, and there were 6,000 churches in them, making on an average 286 persons per church. In the rural part of this state there are more than 4,000 churches having a membership of one hundred or less, 3,000 of seventy-five or less, and more than 2,000 a membership of fifty or less. In most of the communities several churches are trying to do what one church could do more effectively, if left to itself. It has been found, as a rule, that churches whose membership is less than one hundred do not prosper, while the smaller the number the greater the proportion of churches which are dying.

If the statement is true that churches of less than one hundred members do not prosper, and this study discovered abundant evidence to that effect, another striking illustration of overchurching is revealed in the Lane County, Oregon, *Survey:*

> The history of the religious life of Lane County, Oregon, shows many exceptionally poor guesses in the establishing of churches. Practically one out of every five churches established has for one reason or another been allowed to lapse, while many of those which still have the name to live are without any clear hope of future strength. All told, there are twenty-four dead and aban-

[1] Albert J. Kennedy, *Independent* (April 9, 1908), p. 796.

doned churches whose traces are still visible in the county. This is an astonishing number when one considers how recent the development of the county is. Thirteen of these twenty-four abandoned churches were established as competing churches in territories where the resources, either present or future, did not permit of this division of religious interests. The other eleven died because they were very poorly placed. . . . .

There is food for thought in the fact that seventeen churches, fifteen living, two dead, have been organized in the last ten years in pre-emptied fields. These were without opposition organized as competing churches. They were without exception wholly unneeded and they have without exception hindered the religious work in their respective communities.[1]

This survey furthermore showed that in spite of the fact that a number of churches in the large towns had a membership of respectable size, out of forty-eight, the total number in the county which were in divided fields, thirty-five had a membership of less than fifty, seven of these had less than ten members each, and eleven others had less than twenty members each. To maintain eighteen competitive churches which have less than twenty members each, to say nothing of eleven others which have less than fifty members each, would seem to be in a high degree absurd.

There were 105 church organizations in the county with a total membership of 3,814, or an average of thirty-six members per church. A study of ninety of the organized churches showed that nineteen of them had ten or less members, twenty had eleven to twenty members, thirty-one had twenty-one to fifty members, eight had fifty-one to one hundred members, and twelve had one hundred and over.

[1] Ayers and Morse, *Survey Lane County, Oregon*, p. 40.

The foregoing would go far toward confirming the following statement of overchurching in the rural sections at least. "It [the church] has gone on wastefully multiplying church buildings until today we have, in the Middle West and South, at least, four churches where there is support for but one."

This brief and partial presentation of the situation as to overlapping and overchurching shows how widespread it is. It likewise suggests that the problems involved are of fundamental importance. The whole situation has been tersely put as follows:

> How to do away with superfluous churches is a problem that must be faced. It comes near being the most difficult religious problem in the land of sectarian enterprise.
>
> The situation and scandal of it are notorious. In almost every hamlet and crossroad are found little churches with no visible reason for existence, except denominational stubbornness or factions of the fathers. They violate dictates of economy and efficiency, belittle the big religion of Jesus and the apostolic ideal of the church.[1]

There is yet another side to the shield of denominationalism. It not only results in the overlapping of churches in some territories, but it likewise results in the overlooking of other territories. While there is not as much of the latter as the former, it is, nevertheless, quite extensive. It quite frequently occurs that both of these conditions exist side by side. The situation at and near Fairview, Pennsylvania, is typical of the latter. There are to be found in this village of 700 people the following churches: a Methodist, Presbyterian, Evangelical (Association) Lutheran, Episcopal,

[1] Fred W. Palmer, *op. cit.*, p. 459.

and one-half mile outside of it a Disciples church. Outside of the village area there is a territory of a radius of four miles that is entirely without any religious agency.[1]

Many other instances of overlooking or religious destitution are to be found. The surveys made under the Men and Religion Forward Movement reveal many striking examples. The situation in this respect, as discovered by actual school-district surveys, is described as accumulating and appalling. The strictly rural regions are fearfully neglected. In one state investigated, 60,000 to 70,000 of the population were reported as living five miles or more from a church.[2] One rich valley, fifty-four miles from a railroad, with a population of 5,000, capable of supporting 50,000 people, has but one church. Another county has a purely rural population of 18,000, yet only two or three of the sixty-five school districts have regular services. Literally thousands of foreigners in all of the states surveyed never hear the word of God. It was reported that "young people live to maturity and die, within thirty miles of San Francisco, with no religious privileges." In Idaho there is one county with twenty-eight school districts which has only one resident preacher and but four preaching places. Another county has but one preaching station, notwithstanding it has a population of 10,000. Another county in the same state, having a population of 18,000, has only four regular religious services.

Not only is there overlooking in the sense that there are churchless communities, but also in the sense that

[1] Walter E. Meyers, secretary Y.M.C.A., Erie, Pa.

[2] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, IV, 32.

many churches are pastorless, and therefore the community is overlooked. The situation in Maine in 1900 is not altogether unusual, there being 282 pastorless churches in its rural districts. It could be duplicated in other states. For instance, in 1916, there were 700 churches in rural Ohio that had no services.[1]

There is also overlooking in the sense that some churches have only part-time services and many do not have resident pastors. The situation in Ohio is illustrative of this point. Nearly 4,000, or two-thirds, of the churches in the rural sections of the state are without resident pastors. In 26 per cent of the townships no church has a resident pastor. More than 5,000 of the churches are without the undivided services of a minister; more than 2,200 such churches have only one-fourth of a minister's services, or less; and 3,300 have one-third of a minister's services, or less.[2] The situation in this country as to denominational overlapping and overlooking is seemingly well set forth in the following quotation:

> In home mission fields there is both *overlapping and overlooking*. Many fields have been denominationally over cultivated, while many others have been utterly neglected. The amount of overlapping may be exaggerated, but while there is any, there is too much. Certainly the overlooking has not been over estimated. The "Neglected field surveys" are just beginning to make known the vast areas of country which are as destitute religiously as are the jungles of Africa.[3]

That these conditions are due in a large measure to denominationalism, to "the unregulated competition of

[1] C. O. Gill, *Proceedings of the American Sociological Society* (1916), p. 112.

[2] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, IV, 31. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13.

the great national and international Protestant bodies," is becoming well recognized, but these bodies through their national and state missionary organizations and otherwise are seeking to ameliorate the situation. Probably the most outstanding organization in this respect is the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, which is pushing to the limit the practice of federation and comity between the denominations composing it. The next of importance, probably, is the Home Missionary Council organized in 1909, which includes in its membership the leading home mission boards and societies in the United States. In many states similar state organizations have been formed, notably in Washington and Ohio, whose purposes are interchurch and interdenominational co-operation in order to readjust their activities so as to prevent both overlapping and overlooking and also the readjustment of the church life to community welfare and the elimination of waste.

A companion result of denominationalism to the foregoing is that of waste. The following makes this quite evident: "It involves a deplorable waste of power, as when we see in a small town of 1,500 people eleven different church buildings and church organizations."[1]

A situation of this kind involves waste both of money and man power. As Ashenhurst says:

> Different denominations operating in the same territory divide the forces and resources of the community. Each denomination requires the full machinery of a church—buildings and equipment, pastor and other necessary expenses. The results, in many cases, are not equal to the expense involved.[2]

[1] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, IV, 12–13.

[2] J. O. Ashenhurst, *The Day of the Country Church*, p. 108.

This point is further established by the situation discovered by the survey made of Lane County, Oregon. This report states that 96 of the 105 churches in the county had difficulty in raising necessary funds. Only 9 were able to finance their work without special difficulty. The budget raised locally by seventeen parishes having forty-seven points, had to be supplemented by an annual missionary appropriation of $3,390. Of this amount $2,185 was given to churches which were located in communities having more than one church.[1]

In a bulletin issued by the Massachusetts Federation of Churches on *The Consolidation of Churches: Why and How?*[2] the following statement occurs, which is to the point under immediate consideration:

> The waste of maintaining several churches where one could serve the population, is obvious, in the erection and maintenance of buildings, salaries, etc. Especially is it wasteful to ask several trained men each to speak to a handful; for it is easier to preach to 200 than to 50, and the same sermon to the larger number is much more effective. Such duplication is always maintained at a cost of somebody. . . . . An investigation of the 100 smallest towns in Massachusetts classified as one, two, and three church towns, has demonstrated that the per capita cost to members and citizens increases out of proportion to the results.[3]

The foregoing bulletin shows that overchurching results in a "cost" to the ministers as well as to the lay members. This is considered a very serious matter, since salaries at the time of the report were not adequate and, moreover, have not since then kept pace with the

[1] Ayer and Morse, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[2] Bulletin No. 1, New Series, second edition, January, 1914.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

increasing cost of living. It was found that at the time of the investigation the average minister's salary in a town of one church was $874.00; in a two-church town, $687.00; and in a three-church town, $473.00.

Further evidence to the point that overchurching costs the minister is to be found in the accompanying table which shows the situation as to the salary of the fifty-four ministers of Lane County, Oregon.[1]

Salary	Full-Time Ministers	Part-Time Ministers
Receiving salary of:		
$ 0.00	.....	8
250.00	1	11
251.00 to $ 500.00	5	8
501.00 to 750.00	8	2
751.00 to 1,000.00	7	.....
1,001.00 and over	2	.....
Amount of salary unknown	2	.....
Total	25	29

This table indicates that twenty-nine of these ministers combined their ministry with some other kind of employment. It is stated that the twenty-five full-time ministers received an average salary of $665.00, clearly an underliving wage. This would indicate that overchurching results in a real cost to the ministry, and that the comment on the situation that "in various instances the maintenance of existing arrangements is justifiable only on the most narrowly denominational grounds"[2] is correct.

The foregoing statement that overchurching results in waste on account of the erection and maintenance of

[1] Ayer and Morse, *op. cit.*, p. 66. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 64.

buildings[1] is made evident by that which follows, which, although giving the situation of over a decade ago, would probably be comparatively true now.

> Our population in round numbers is 93,000,000 while the total Protestant and Roman Catholic church membership is 36,000,000. The total seating capacity of all Protestant and Roman Catholic edifices in 1906 was 58,536,830. The rate of increase in seating capacity and population has been about the same. On any given Sunday only 70 per cent of our total population could be accommodated with our church seating. There are Protestant sittings for 53,250,000 while the total Protestant church membership is 22,000,000. The average seating capacity of the Protestant churches is three times that of the average membership, while in Roman Catholic churches the average membership is two and one-fourth times the seating capacity.[2]

This statement presents the fact that the Protestant churches of this country have six and three quarters times as much seating capacity per member as the Catholic churches. From this it is quite evident that denominationalism, which is the cause of overchurching, results in waste and lack of economy.

A previously mentioned bulletin[3] points out, furthermore, that overchurching results in waste to the mission boards. It points out that in 100 churches covered by a survey in Massachusetts the average outside aid required in the one-church towns was $15.00 and in the three-church towns $155.00 per year, or ten times as much. Another points out:

> There is a growing belief among the Christian people of this country that the time is ripe for a greater working unity between

[1] See p. 14. [2] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, IV, 23–24.

[3] Bulletin No. 1, New Series, Massachusetts Federation of Churches, p. 3.

the English speaking Evangelistical denominations. Among the facts which enforce this view there is none stronger than the evident overlapping, waste and consequent extravagance that has distinguished the distribution of some of the mission funds subscribed for the advancement of the religious life of the west.[1]

As a striking illustration of this point he gives the following table which shows the expenditure of missionary boards of the Methodist, Congregational, Baptist, and Episcopal churches in a town some miles west of Minneapolis, Minnesota, having a total population of 1,347, of whom 475 were of American descent. The missionary appropriations were for churches of the latter group.

Aid and Salary	Cong.	Meth.	Bap.	Episc.
Total missionary aid	$10,504	$3,700	$3,100	$850
Average yearly missionary aid	292	115	104	105
Average salary of minister	800	700	600	50
Average church subscription for salary	600	550	447	383

Summarized for the Town

Total missionary funds used in town	$17,962
Average missionary aid per year (since town was founded)	534
Town's average subscription for religious services	1,500
Average membership	133

The situation may be better realized by the further information that at the time the investigation was made only two of the churches were having services, and one of those semimonthly, and the total membership was eighty-three. The existing church buildings were erected at a cost of $21,300, the mission boards contributing $3,450 of this sum, and of the total value of the buildings $7,400 lay absolutely idle and useless.

[1] Albert J. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, LXIV, 795.

The investigator makes the following caustic comment respecting the foregoing situation: "Such a condition as that outlined above brings religion into discredit in the community, causes many to scoff at the church; takes the heart out of the zealous lay workers; and makes it difficult for a minister of religion to hold up his head."[1] He furthermore says in this connection that "The state of affairs in this town is not an unusual one, and is paralleled in a number of nearby places."[2] And that

> a pressing need is for a union of missionary societies for the purpose of weeding out dead churches where the evident misjudgment of the past has overworked a field, the sanity of the present should do what it can to remedy the fault. . . . . Certain it is that one of the next great religious advancements must be toward the unification of religious work for the purpose of eliminating waste.[3]

Not a great deal has actually been done to meet this "pressing need." It is true that several states now have interdenominational missionary boards, committees on interchurch co-operation to assist in the readjustment of the church life to community welfare, and state federations which are considering this whole matter of overlapping and overlooking,[4] waste and inefficiency that results from denominationalism, but not much has actually been accomplished in a concrete way. The situation in this respect just at present is well summarized in the following:

> Movements for the federation of Protestant church agencies have succeeded in formulating ideals and standards to which

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 799.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 795.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 799.
[4] See chap. ii.

denominational bodies subscribe and which their foreign and home missionary agencies accept. But locally in cities and suburbs, in towns and villages, with a few notable exceptions, the disastrous competition or non-cooperative deadlock prevails.[1]

Not only does denominationalism result in the waste of money and men, but also in moral powers, finer emotions, and religious enthusiasm. This has been pointed out by probably the best-informed churchman in this country as follows:

> Meanwhile one of the most startling discoveries is that we have created our human power and, as our legislation witnesses, we have been criminally prodigal with human life. . . . . But these are not an intimation of the worst of our dissipations, and indeed, these wastes have been largely because of a deeper and more serious prodigality. We have let the very light within us become darkness and the saddest of all has been the waste of our moral powers, our finer emotions, and our religious enthusiasms, through sectarian divisions, denominational rivalries and unrestrained caprice often deluding itself as a religious loyalty.[2]

There is another result of denominationalism which was discovered by this study that is of vital importance. It is religious inefficiency. This has been intimated, suggested, and even definitely stated before. It is of such great importance that it will be given more definite consideration at this point. In this respect it has been said that the pitiful thing about our sectarianism is not so much that the church is broken up into so many separate units, but that the disunity of organization results in religious inefficiency.[3]

[1] *Survey*, XXXVII, 727.

[2] Charles S. Macfarland, *Christian Union Quarterly*, VII, 35–36.

[3] Kenyon L. Butterfield, *The Country Church and the Rural Problem*, p. 115.

A survey made of Windsor County, Ohio, substantiates the last contention somewhat. It shows that in the smaller communities the more numerous the churches the greater the loss has been in attendance in the last twenty years. Another statement from the same source says:

> This fact refutes the old plea that denominational rivalry stimulated the churches to efficiency. Thus in the small counties with only one church there has been a loss of total attendance of thirty per cent in twenty years while in the small communities with two churches there was a loss of fifty per cent and where there were more than two churches a loss of fifty-five per cent.[1]

This condition is not peculiar to Ohio, but it is widespread. In eight counties in Pennsylvania, investigation revealed that 24 per cent of the churches were losing ground, 26 per cent are standing still, and only 50 per cent are making any headway at all.

That conditions are not different in the western sections of the United States is evident from the following table, which shows the situation of ninety of the churches in Lane County, Oregon:[2]

Churches showing a net loss for the year	24
Churches breaking even for the year	29
Churches with net gain of less than 5 per cent	3
Churches with net gain of 5 to 10 per cent	8
Churches with net gain of more than 10 per cent	26

Stated otherwise, the net gain of the competitive churches was on an average of 2.3 persons per church,

[1] C. O. Gill and Clifford Pinchot, *Survey of Windsor County, Ohio*, p. 75.

[2] Arthur J. Todd, *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work* (1917), p. 626.

while the net gain of the non-competitive was on an average of four persons per church, or 7.3 and 14.2 per cent respectively.

The following table for the same territory, but covering a longer period than one year, shows still more plainly the fact that denominationalism results in inefficiency:

Non-competitive Churches		Competitive Churches		
No. of Churches	Percentage of Total No.	No. of Churches		Percentage of Total No.
22	58.0	5	Increase	20.8
13	34.2	5	Stationary	20.8
3	7.8	14	Decreasing	58.4
38	100.0	24		100.0

The importance of the inefficiency caused by denominationalism in the country churches is seen not only in its effect upon the rural communities, but when seen in its wider relations. To get the full significance of it, it must be considered in its relation to the city communities and society at large for there are very important and vital social relationships between city and rural communities.

Their interactions are such that whatever makes for good or bad, for the efficiency or the inefficiency, of the one affects the other likewise. If the country churches do not function effectively, the cities suffer as well as the country. This is clearly brought out in the following:

> The influence of the country upon the city is an important factor in the making of the opportunity of the church of the rural districts. The strongest forces making for righteousness in the cities have their origin in the country. The canvass of 100 prominent men in one of our great cities showed that eighty-five

per cent of the lawyers, bankers, merchants and journalists were brought up in the country. City pastors testify that the best members of their churches have been trained in the country churches.[1]

And in another instance the same writer says: "It is said that the country churches furnish five-sixths of our ministers and five-sevenths of our professors."[2]

While in many instances the evidence was not so abundant and convincing that denominationalism caused inefficiency of city churches, nevertheless it was cumulative and convincing in this respect also. The following is quite to the point:

> When we examine the efficiency methods of the church, no lengthy investigation is needed to show that there is serious waste in the duplication of work. There are communities where five churches are working in a field that could better be served by two, or perhaps by one. The community builds five churches and then tries to maintain those five buildings and support five pastors, when two churches and two pastors, or perhaps one church and one pastor could minister to the community with equal efficiency and certainly with far less friction.[3]

The author of the foregoing says of his own town that there are twenty-three congregations having their own buildings and their own ministers. Moreover, there are four or five other religious organizations that hold meetings in halls or in private homes. He further states that it is evident that no such number of churches are required, and that six or eight would be a generous estimate of the number actually needed.[4] This situation is typical of a vast number of others.

[1] J. O. Ashenhurst, *op. cit.*, p. 17. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 231.

[3] David Littell McNary, *Ladies' Home Journal* (June, 1918), p. 33.

[4] David Littell McNary, Freeport, Ill., First Presbyterian Church.

Another situation clearly to the point came under personal observation in making this study. The head resident of one of the leading social settlements in Chicago, and pastor of the church which is a part of it, made the following remark, which in a vivid way presented the denominational situation in the immediate community: "I can take a pistol and stand on the top of the Lincoln Center and fire into seven churches of as many different denominations."[1]

It is but just to state that these were all large churches and all Protestant except one. This condition was further characterized by him as follows: "The six churches located so close together reveal the imbecility of Protestantism." Another has said in this respect:

> There is as much need of a Protestant reformation now as there was in Luther's time, not because the church is debased, but because of the practical opportunity to which it needs to become adapted as it is not under its present denominational form of organization—then there would not be four churches on the four corners of the streets that cross in the best residential section of a city and scores of miles of streets in the neediest section of the same city without a church in sight, while churches retire and disappear from city neighborhoods in proportion as the needs of churches in these neighborhoods increase, nor would there anywhere be sixteen weak and competing country churches in the radius of three miles.[2]

In the foregoing are to be found some of the results of denominationalism. These are the larger, more general, and more inclusive ones. No attempt has been made to set them forth in detail. That would have required going beyond the scope and purpose of

[1] Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Lincoln Center, Chicago.

[2] E. C. Hayes, *American Journal of Sociology*, XVI, 694.

this survey. The whole situation seems to be well summarized in the following:

> From the days of Luther down to the present, the centrifugal forces of Protestantism have produced disunion in purpose and division of strength. Now at last the church is beginning to realize the waste involved in multiplied and overlapping parishes; the shame of Christian brethren working at cross purposes; the necessity for a generous and mutual spirit of tolerance and the concentration of strength that is secured by unity.[1]

[1] From a letter sent out to members of the Chicago Church Federation Council, December 7, 1917, by the President and Secretary.

CHAPTER II

SOME OF THE CAUSES FOR THE TREND TOWARD DENOMINATIONAL UNITY

From the preceding brief presentation of the results of denominationalism it would seem quite correct to conclude that the centrifugal forces of Protestantism have been in the ascendancy, resulting in a divided church, unregulated competition, denominational overlooking and overlapping, waste, inefficiency, and bringing the church into sharp criticism and even into disrespect and contempt. On the other hand, there have also been centripetal forces at work making for the things directly contrary to the results of the centrifugal ones. During the last half-century these forces working for unity of the denominations and the attendant results have gradually gained in strength until they have outweighted the opposite and turned the balance in the other direction. Great leveling forces have been at work breaking down barriers, creating conditions favorable to denominational unity, and stimulating the movement to that end.[1] Careful investigation reveals that there is now a decided trend toward denominational unity. It has been slowly evolving and gradually gaining in momentum. A little later some concrete material will be given that shows this trend. At this point some of its causes will be presented.

One of the causes for this trend is a practical one. It is the widespread demand throughout the country for

[1] Henry C. McComas, *The Psychology of Religious Sects.*

economy, efficiency, co-operation, consolidation, and community of action in religious matters, and the elimination of waste. It is a part of the general demand for efficiency. The situation is well stated in the following:

> Naturally enough, the church has felt the same pressure which practical men of affairs, owing largely to an economic impulse, have brought to bear upon all forms of activity, by which combinations, consolidations, and organized trusts have been created. Capital long since pooled its issues in corporations, the smaller constantly giving place to larger combinations. Labor gathered scattered individuals into local unions, and these in turn into associations and federations. All the arts and sciences, all the philanthropies and charities, and many of the purely social functions have tended toward centralized forms of expression. The economic cry has been, "Let us cut out waste; let us eliminate competition; let us reduce overhead charges." It is not at all surprising that the men who have been reconstructing industrial and commercial enterprises upon the principle of consolidation should bring into church circles and church councils the same principles and advocate their adoption and application with even increased insistence. There has been a great "drift" in ecclesiastical affairs, as there has been in all human affairs, toward a common center.[1]

The same thought is expressed by another in the following words: "Expediency, efficiency, economy, success as against threatened extermination, the last will and prayer of our Lord Himself, every dictate of common sense and a common impress of humanity, ought to furnish reasons enough and argument enough for Christian unity."[2]

The foregoing view was given expression in the address of the former President of the Federal Council

[1] Alfred Williams Anthony, *American Journal of Theology*, XX, 500–501.

[2] Shailer Mathews, *Biblical World*, XLIX, 72.

of the Churches of Christ in America, at a recent meeting of that body; while speaking of the work and problems confronting the newly created Committees on Rural Life, he said:

> It is at least bringing to bear upon our rural life a conception of a great evangelical Christianity distinct from the competition which too often has marred the church life in small communities. No careful student of the present tendencies in American life can avoid seeing that only as denominations co-operate in some way in the maintenance of churches in the country districts can those districts be prevented from falling into irreligion of the densest sort.[1]

The awakening to the realization of such facts as these has been among the powerful stimuli for the trend toward co-operation and denominational unity.

The widespread demand under immediate consideration has found expression, not only in words, but in actual practice. Many illustrations of it were discovered by this study in the community churches, among which may be mentioned the Congregational Community Church, Winnetka, Illinois,[2] Olivet Institute, Chicago,[3] and the Church of the Brethren, Waterloo, Iowa.[4]

Another cause for the trend toward denominational unity that is worthy of notice is the shifting of emphasis from the "other worldly" to "this worldly" point of view. It is only necessary to call attention to the various activities of a more general character that are now carried on by a vast number of churches to realize that this is true. That the social betterment of the

[1] Shailer Mathews, *loc. cit.*

[2] See p. 107.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 113.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

people and the community is a part of the work of the church is now quite generally recognized by it. That it is giving much time and energy and concern to that part of its work is giving much concern to some. They maintain that personal salvation, the salvation of each person's soul for the "other world" is the one and only mission of the church. However, the social conception of the church's mission is gaining the ascendancy. It is now widely considered to be the church's duty not only to save a man's soul, but also to save his whole life. Moreover, it is to "save" the whole life or environment or society in which he lives. It has been said in this connection:

> If a church that is interested simply in itself as a church with care only for its peculiar type of edification now, and forward looking to the triumph of a judgment day, when it can marshal a certain number of saved individuals as its credentials, that such is a separatist affair, at least abandoning the rest of society instead of helping to carry on the social process.[1]

In other words, it is now considered the church's first concern to save the life that now is, for this world, here and now, judging that this is the best and surest way of saving it for the "other world." This is outstandingly the point of view of the community churches. This is quite evident from their declarations as to purpose and, better still, from the activities which they carry on.[2] It has been discovered that greater progress and attainment can be made in this social salvation—"this worldly" salvation—by the united action of the various denominations than by each one working alone. This

[1] Albion W. Small, *Principles of Sociology*, p. 286.

[2] See chap. vi, "Activities of Community Churches."

holds true in respect to either a local community or a larger sphere. It has been discovered that it is frequently necessary to have the united action of all the denominations in order to accomplish anything at all in the way of "social salvation," i.e., social reformation and social betterment. The widespread recognition of this fact is one of the causes for the trend for denominational unity. As has been said: "Happily the emphasis in religion is undergoing a rapid change. The outward is taking the place of the upward look. If abstract doctrines have tended to divide men the understanding of common tasks now is to unite them."[1]

Closely related to the foregoing causes for the trend toward denominational unity is the widespread and prevalent disregard for denominational differences of dogma and doctrine. That such is the case is amply illustrated in what is later said about the community church and denominational unity.[2] Moreover, it is noteworthy that in almost all communions there are men and women who have this attitude. They do not care for their particular churches as they do for the church universal.[3] Doctrinal interests are not in the spirit of the times.[4] The following quotation is quite to the point:

> There are in the United States about 150 Protestant denominations and about 150 more separate and independent Protestant congregations that belong to no one of these denominations. The difference between them in a few instances are of some importance, but in most cases their present day significance is nothing. They

[1] Howard E. Jensen, *Social Ideals and Unity of Religious Forces*, p. 82.

[2] See chap. vii. [3] McComas, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

[4] Kirshner, *Constructive Quarterly*, I, 70.

are kept alive by ecclesiastical machinery and traditional momentum. They are such as these: shall we pray to God with a book; or extemporaneously; or in silence. In adult baptism shall we apply the man to the water or the water to the man, etc., etc. . . . . The ministers no longer talk about these things; the laity no longer think about them. It is true that there are differences of temperament and taste. But the Masonic Order, the Y.M.C.A., and the Roman Catholic Church have demonstrated that men of different states and temperaments can co-operate harmoniously in philanthropic and religious institutions.[1]

The statement that denominationalism in the last few years has been undergoing a very remarkable change well describes the situation. Whereas most of the denominations started in the spirit of sectarianism and became belligerent bodies, denominationalism at the present time is rapidly becoming co-operative. It represents the federal idea rather than the imperial.[2]

The cause for this new attitude, or disregard for denominational differences, with its attendant result of causing a trend in the direction of denominational unity, has been comprehensively set forth in the declarations that the essential element of Christianity—service—largely as a result of the work of the churches, has now widespread acceptance, and that many are not captivated by the doctrinal side of church activities; that such men must understand the meaning of faith to Paul by the meaning of religion to Jesus; that they respond to the appeal of service, that they do not take interest in the matters of doctrine; that to such the church is a function, not an interpreter of dogma; that what represents religious sanity in such a movement it is for time

[1] *Outlook*, LXXXVII, 894.

[2] Shailer Mathews, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

to reveal, but the current now flows toward service and away from systems of doctrine; that service brings religious people together and doctrine separates them; that it is therefore natural with the present tendency toward making religion and activity that there should be a profound movement toward religious consolidation. The reaction from narrower and narrower divisions, smaller and smaller groups within Protestantism is very determined; that if activity proves a working basis for the fellowship of Christian people, we may in time have the community church attempting to serve all the people in every possible way, and in association with other churches assuming the same function.[1] From what will be presented later concerning the community church, its activities, its attitude toward doctrine and denominationalism and denominational unity, it will be seen that this vision of a decade ago is now being realized or embodied in them.[2]

Closely related to the foregoing cause of this trend is that of the popularity of the idea of denominational unity. Dr. Warren H. Wilson says: "The doctrine of religious unity is dear to the hearts of the Christian people. . . . . Especially is it so to business men and farmers. One meets it in all parts of the country. In every public gathering the expression of the longing for religious unity calls forth a tumultuous applause."[3]

The popularity of this ideal is further illustrated in a description of the situation in Ohio, in which it is stated that very large numbers of the rural people

[1] Ernest B. Groves, *Rural Problems of Today*, p. 67.

[2] See chaps. iii and iv.

[3] *The Church at the Center*, p. 93.

keenly realize the need of interchurch co-operation. When a speaker in a farmers' institute mentions the need of it, he is nearly always applauded by his hearers and made conscious of their hearty approval.[1] In making this study many personal interviews were held with persons from many walks in life, business men, professional men, and laborers. All of them, with only here and there a rare expection, were in favor of denominational unity, and most of them spoke in the most enthusiastic manner in its behalf.

The recent war did much to popularize this idea. It is said that those who come from the battlefields of Europe never refer to religious matters without speaking of the spirit of unity which was everywhere evident. In magazine articles, in the newspapers, in books, this statement is reiterated, and it is declared that the soldiers do not care for the various religious shibboleths. The chaplains of all faiths fraternized with one another and ministered alike to the wounded and dying of all creeds. Such is the testimony, moreover, of Y.M.C.A. secretaries, soldiers, and correspondents from the field. The substance of the following has been expressed thousands of times and seems to correctly present the situation among the soldiers:

> Distinctions of faith have largely disappeared among the Protestants. For instance. . . . the Baptist chums daily with the Presbyterian, the Congregationalist with the Episcopalian. The hair-splitting differences are unknown among them. The result is that the men are gradually moulded into a hardy faith that rests only on the fundamental solidities of nature—honor, courage, and truth being the main ones.[2]

[1] C. O. Gill, unpublished manuscript.

[2] Lieutenant Harold Hersey, U.S.N.G., *Scribner's*, August, 1918.

Not only has the war been the cause of this point of view among the soldiers in the training camps, at home, and on the battlefields abroad, but it has likewise resulted in the spirit of unity among the churches and people at home and has been of tremendous force in accelerating the trend toward denominational unity. The problems arising out of the war were such that the various denominations had to co-operate in order to meet them. This is illustrated in the following taken from a letter sent out on August 15, 1918, by the executive secretary of the Home Missions Council to all ministers throughout the country:

> The war has presented many stern necessities. Two which affect all people, seem destined this coming fall and winter to compel many churches either to (1) hold no services, or (2) hold services together as union services. . . . . The two necessities are the lack of fuel and the lack of men. . . . . The Home Missions Council, through its extensive officers, makes an appeal to all Christian churches seriously to consider the possibilities of joining with their church neighbors in common worship, and united ministeries in the communities in which they are placed. If fuel and men can thereby be saved, if fellowship can be enlarged and efficiency be increased, no richer testimony could be given to the adaptability and perennial vigor of the church of Jesus Christ to serve in our modern world.[1]

Thus is stated how the war, by the practical demands it created, has fostered the spirit of unity and actual co-operation, which, in turn, fosters the trend toward denominational unity. That it has done this was declared in a recent address by the president of one of the largest city federations of churches in this country,

[1] Alfred Williams Anthony, executive secretary of the Home Missions Council.

in which he said that this war had advanced the cause of denominational unity fifty years.[1]

Another illustration of this point was the oversubscription to the Inter-War Work Activities Fund in November, 1918, to which subscriptions were made by all denominations alike for agencies that represented all denominations, not only Protestant, but Catholic and Jewish as well. It can be said with certainty that probably the war has done more to level denominational barriers and promote denominational unity than all other events together in the last one hundred years. Many barriers, although formerly they seemed insurmountable, were swept away so that all might unite their forces to attain an end that was for the good of all. It is not probable that these barriers will ever be rebuilt. There is a new spirit in the church. As someone has said:

> A great sense of ethical justice, a great longing for social righteousness, and a great experience in human brotherhood, have come to the spirits of men so that after the sacrificial services of many nations on many battlefields for a common cause the nations of the earth can never again live entirely apart and unconcerned respecting the interests and welfare of their neighbors; and after the intermingling of men who face death together and have reached out a hand for a grip on realities, the little differences and sectarian bickerings which once seemed inevitable will never again be tolerated.[2]

These characteristics growing out of the war have most assuredly added momentum to the movement for the union of the various denominations.

[1] Herbert L. Willett, Inter-Church Workers' Conference, Chicago, September, 1918.

[2] Alfred W. Anthony, pamphlet on *Church Federation in Terms of Fraternity, Democracy, and Altruism*, p. 12.

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The foregoing is suggestive of another cause for the trend toward denominational unity. This survey revealed the fact that the spirit of the times is toward toleration and things that matter and unite rather than toward those that divide. Evidence on this point was abundant and thoroughly convincing. A meager part of it will be presented here.

Some seven years ago this situation was observed and pointed out as follows:

> The whole situation has changed, or is rapidly changing. The lingo about the only church has perished from our language. Instead, the shibboleth for the last ten years has become in ecclesiastical what it was earlier in political circles: In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity. The changed note in the thinking of the churches has changed their activities. Formerly, there was great activity in discussing the church. Every man was the defender of his own church; now there is no necessity, for no one attacks. Then every one did his utmost to get adherents to his church; now it is of no consequence to the ordinary layman.[1]

This thought is similarly expressed in the historical sketch of one of the community churches which came under observation. After a brief appreciation of the cause for the pressure of various denominational organizations in the community, the following occurs:

> The churches of the community bring to the investigator a long and honorable history. The spirit of the age, however, is toward toleration, and in Christian matters to emphasize the great essentials rather than those that divide. In this, in common with many other communities, many men and women had been asking in recent years whether a regrouping and consolidation of the

[1] John L. Gillin, *American Journal of Sociology*, XVI, 69.

Christian forces of the town would not make more strongly for those things for which the Christian church stands.[1]

The same thought was expressed by a very prominent layman in a recent address which attracted nation-wide attention and was made much of in both the secular and the religious press. The part of the address that is to the point under consideration and that caused most of the discussion and criticism was the following:

> Immersion as a condition of admission into the church is man-made. If the Baptist Church is to bear its part in the leadership of the church of the future, it must not exclude good Christian men and women on matters of form. In the Church of the future, form and ceremony will play a minor part."

He pointed out, furthermore, that the government, after years of encouraging competition, had now in its crisis turned to co-operation, and that Christianity would turn in the same direction. He suggested that the time would come when, instead of trying to support a half-dozen churches, the small community would have only one or two, but supported by the entire community. Commenting on this part of the address, Dr. Washington Gladden says that Mr. Rockefeller has expressed in these brief sentences the conditions upon which Christian unity may be attained. Churches may continue to maintain their distinctive creeds and rituals, but they can effectively unite only by agreeing that these distinctive peculiarities are not essential elements of Christianity and can be safely discarded in co-operative work.[2]

That the churches are awakening to these demands and seeking to meet them is another very vital factor in the trend toward denominational unity.

[1] *Manual of the United Church of Garrettsville, Ohio* (1917), p. 3.

[2] *Outlook*, December 19, 1917.

The causes presented in the foregoing are only some of the outstanding ones which are responsible for the trend toward denominational unity. This study discovered some concrete evidence of such a trend. Some of them which show this since the beginning of the nineteenth century are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

SOME CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF THE TREND TOWARD DENOMINATIONAL UNITY SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

As was stated at the close of preceding chapter, only some concrete illustrations of the trend toward denominational unity are to be considered here. They do not show actual denominational unity, but a tendency toward it by the breaking down of denominational prejudice and the co-operation of the constitutents of the various organizations. No attempt will be made to show in detail how or to what extent each or all of them have made for the trend in this direction. They are given here because they illustrate the existence of such a trend in this country during the last one hundred years, and because they present the proper background of the relationship of the community-church movement to it.

The first one of large significance and among the oldest of such organizations was the American Sunday School Union, organized in May, 1824. The total strength of this union in 1916 was 207,789 Sunday schools, 2,049,293 officers and teachers, and 20,569,831 pupils. In 1872 this organization provided for a system of international lessons to be used by the schools in order that all might be studying the same material at the same time. This did a great deal to unify the schools. This organization has so directed the work among the Sunday schools of this country that practi-

cally all of them have become affiliated and co-operate along non-denominational lines. It has instituted the holding of national, state, county, and township conventions, and every Sunday school, even those in the remotest rural districts, are reached by the organization and correlated with the others. It seeks to promote those things that are of common interest to the schools of all denominations, and that make for the common welfare. It is strictly non-denominational and has greatly developed good-fellowship among the various denominations and likewise has done much to break down the barriers between them. It clearly shows the trend toward denominational unity.

Another example to the point is the Y.M.C.A. It was first organized in this country in 1851, and has had a remarkable growth. There are now 2,087 associations in this country, having 720,468 members, and property valued at $97,330,782.[1] Its fundamental purpose is the development of the whole individual in "spirit, mind, and body." It includes in its membership men of all evangelical Protestant denominations and has done much to advance the trend toward denominational unity as is substantiated in the following quotation:

> The spirit of unity has been expressed in this country for the work of the Young Men's Christian Association. There are two things which explain this substantial approval of this great undertaking. It stands for religious unity and practical human service. It is the embodiment of the two great essentials set forth in the Old Testament and reiterated by Jesus, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God and thy neighbor." Two Sundays ago I spent the day in a hut in a great aviation camp. At eight o'clock and at nine o'clock a Roman Catholic priest conducted mass in the hut.

[1] *Daily News Almanac and Year Book* (1918), p. 199.

The second person I met on entering the building was the Jewish Welfare Worker, whose headquarters were there, and twice during the day as a Protestant minister, I preached the Gospel of Faith and service to the magnificent men who were preparing to give their lives for America and humanity. Every hut stands for religious unity. And every hut stands for service seven days in-the-week.[1]

Another organization that shows the trend in this direction is the United Society of Christian Endeavor. This society, which has for its objective the religious development and training of young people for service, is composed of representatives from the Congregational, Christian, Disciples of Christ, and Presbyterian churches. It had its inception in 1881 and now has four million members.[2] This shows the trend toward denominational unity, inasmuch as the young people of denominations as widely divergent as the Disciples of Christ and the Presbyterians are harmoniously organized into one organization and are working together for common ends.

The Laymen's Missionary Movement and the Men and Religion Forward Movement were both interdenominational in character and united denominations of widely divergent beliefs and practices in the undertaking of common tasks. Another movement of a similar character among college students is the Student Volunteer Movement of the United States and Canada. These organizations have had a profound influence upon this trend by rising above denominational barriers and in organizing the different denominations for the undertaking of common tasks and promoting common interests.

[1] Roy B. Guild, address at National Conference of Social Work, Kansas City, Mo., January, 1918.

[2] *Atlantic Monthly* (February, 1918), p. 151.

A further concrete evidence of this trend is the attempt that has recently been made to federate and unify closely related denominational groups. For instance, there is a commission composed of representatives from the Methodist Protestant, the Methodist Episcopal, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, churches. This commission was appointed by the General Conferences of these bodies, which is seeking to formulate plans for their organic union. And again, three of the Lutheran bodies, the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod, South, have just officially merged into one ecclesiastical organization by the name of the United Lutheran Church in America, with a combined strength of 3,000 ministers, 5,000 churches, and 2,600,000 members in the Uni ed States and Canada.[1]

Not only has there been an attempt to federate closely related denominational groups, but the process has gone farther. Dean Shailer Mathews, in speaking of the work of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, says: "The interesting fact here is that we seem to have passed into the second stage. We first established organizations to federate certain types of Christian life; now we are trying to federate these federated movements."[2]

Another illustration of this trend is the co-operation and federation of various denominations in their foreign-missionary activities. This came about not only because it prevented the overlapping and the duplication of equipment, expenditure of men and money, but also

[1] *Homiletic Review* (January, 1919), p. 31.

[2] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, IV, 71.

because there was an insistent demand for federation, co-operation, and unity of the Christian forces by the foreign peoples. The following is illustrative:

> The Centenary Missionary Conference in China in 1907 registered high in this respect. Both the missionaries and the native Christians expressed in unequivocal terms both the necessity and their earnest desire for Christian Unity, and all other centers of Christian activity in the heathen world have made their plea for brotherhood among all believers and in many instances have already combined their forces. The great Missionary Conference in Edinburgh sounded this note in all its discussions and the responses were always cordial.[1]

At the Edinburgh Conference on World-Missions the whole foreign-mission field was divided, and each of the great evangelical denominations had a definite section assigned to it for which it should be responsible. In respect to what influence this movement for federation and unity in the foreign field has had on the trend toward federation and unity in the home field, Dr. Charles S. McFarland has said: "Attention should be called to the fact that federation in the home field is largely in the nature of reflection from foreign missions."[2]

The federation in the home-mission field just mentioned is another thing that shows the trend toward denominational unity. Federation in this field was brought about in order to prevent waste of money by the various denominational mission boards and likewise to do away with the overlapping of the denominations in some territories and the overlooking in others with their attendant undesirable results. In the main it was created for purely practical purposes. That this organ-

[1] *Biblical World*, IV, 72.

[2] *Christian Union Quarterly*, July, 1917.

ization shows a trend in the direction under consideration is clearly indicated in the following:

By far the most important advance made in the direction of unity in the home mission work was the organization, in 1909, of the Home Missions Council, which includes in its membership the leading Home Mission Boards and Societies in the United States. While its object is not legislative, it was a great thing to bring these denominational bodies into consultation and co-operation, and the results have already been significant. For one thing a home mission campaign for information and inspiration was planned, with meetings at strategic points throughout the country. Then a series of state surveys was taken, in order that there might be accurate and definite information concerning the present conditions. Fourteen or more western states have already been canvassed, and surprising facts have been brought to light. Consultations have been held in principal cities in both the east and west, with a view of learning from the leaders in the various states what practical steps may be possible to secure the co-operation needed. The one thing in every mind has been the need of getting closer together, and in some way putting an end to a sectarianism that means weakness, deterioration and either needless division or pitiful destitution.[1]

The Survey Committee of this Council presented to it a report that included the following, which was adopted:

We should follow a steady policy and adopt vigorous measures for accomplishing two ends: One is the prevention of wasting, by competition, missionary funds, workers and interest: the other and paramount end is the establishment of efficient co-operation among evangelical denominations so as to meet the unmet spiritual needs of America and bring about the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven here.[2]

To accomplish these ends this Council has sought to bring about co-operation and comity of the denomina-

[1] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, IV, 34–35.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36.

tions in unoccupied fields and federation and unification in over-churched fields, which again reveals a trend in the direction under discussion.

Probably the most extraordinary or outstanding evidence of a trend toward denominational unity was the formation of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America in 1908. This organization is composed of thirty of the largest Protestant evangelical denominations in this country, and includes 142,671 churches, having a total membership of 18,620,136. The basis, scope, and limitations of the organization are indicated in the preamble to its constitution which is as follows: "In the providence of God, the time has come when it seems fitting to manifest the essential oneness of the Christian Church of America, in Jesus Christ as their Divine Lord and Saviour, and to promote the spirit of fellowship, service, and co-operation among them."[1]

This organization does not seek to unite the denominations on the basis of theology or policy but on that of service, as is evident from the following appeal which it recently sent out:

> This is a time for heart searching and revaluation of present forces and organizations, a realignment of the churches in the interest of economy, efficiency, unity, the glory of God, and the greater good of mankind.
>
> The Christian Churches of America, with the nation, face world problems today. To meet these problems there must be thrift, co-operation, nation wide and a world-wide vision and greater unity of life and action.
>
> Groups of denominations, constituting one family by reason of history, policy or doctrine, might well seriously and promptly consider the call to unite, and thus meet the shortage of ministers,

[1] *Year Book of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America* (1918), p. 209.

overcome administrative duplication, overlapping of territory, and overlooking of the needs of great sections of our land and nations abroad.[1]

The fact that this organization is not merely a voluntary agency or simply an interdenominational fellowship, but an efficiently and ecclesiastically constituted body, marks a long step forward in the trend toward denominational unity.[2] The trend is furthermore evidenced by the work that it has been doing. In general, this may be described as twofold: first, the cultivation of the growing sense of evangelical unity among the co-operating denominations; and second, the expression of this community feeling at points where such expression is both possible and needed.[3]

Closely paralleling the preceding organization is another which, although approaching the matter of denominational unity from a very different angle, nevertheless shows a trend toward it. It is the Commission for a World Conference on Faith and Order. This movement was launched by the Episcopal church in this country at its convention in 1910. At that meeting a preliminary commission was appointed to arrange for a world-conference as described. Eighteen denominations immediately responded to the request that delegates be appointed, and when the first informal meeting was held in New York, May 8, 1913, thirty communions were represented.[4]

[1] *Men and Missions* (February, 1918), p. 167.

[2] *Year Book of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America* (1918), p. 209.

[3] Shailer Mathews, *Biblical World*, XLIX, 68.

[4] Howard E. Jensen, *Social Idealism and the Unification of Religious Forces*.

A significant occurrence in connection with this event is the fact that without any knowledge of what the Episcopal church was doing, and on the very same day, the Disciples of Christ, in their national convention at Topeka, Kansas, likewise appointed a Committee on Comity, Federation, and Unity. The Presbyterian church already had a standing Committee on Church Co-operation and Unity. It has been said: "A general sentiment has been awakened and never have there been in America so many sympathetic listeners to the call for a United Christendom as today."[1]

These things are clearly indicative of the trend of affairs in the direction of denominational unity. The formation of state federations of churches shows the same thing. The Home Mission Council of Western Washington is typical in this respect. In the report of a survey that was made in February, 1912, under the direction of this organization, the following is given as one of the conclusions reached:

> There must be developed some sort of Community Church under denominational control where all Christians can have fellowship and can co-operate in the religious work of their own community without violation of their consciences. Such a Community Church must . . . . include in its working force Baptists, Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, Methodists, and others. Already such churches are being organized under the auspices of different denominations, and the communities are adapting themselves to the situation. There is to be no other church organized until the community is able to support more.[2]

[1] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, IV, 68.

[2] Home Mission Council, Western Washington, *Statement of Principles*, p. 4.

In the same report the following significant statement is found: "The general feeling manifested by the returns shows little care for denominationalism."[1]

Many other states now have similar commissions. Others have state federations, among them being Maine, Ohio, California, and Massachusetts. The latter has fifteen denominations represented in its federation, including 93 per cent of the Protestant membership of the state. It covers the whole state and every phase of federation. It has brought about the federation of twenty-five churches. The city, township, and group federations number fifty. In some of the larger cities, city federation have been brought about and paid secretaries are in charge of them. The state secretary said at a recent conference that the ideal of this state federation was to have every case of church duplication in the state removed by 1920.[2]

The numerous city federations of churches are another evidence of the trend toward the union of the various denominations. Many of the larger cities, such as Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Cleveland, and Minneapolis, have strong city federations. These seek to avoid the duplication of churches and especially to promote the practice of comity between the denominations. The latter practice has risen out of the recognition that division and overlapping prevent and comity makes for community welfare. They likewise seek unity of action on the part of all the denominations concerning the various movements for religious, social, and civic betterment.

[1] Home Mission Council, Western Washington, *Statement of Principles*, p. 5.

[2] Talmage E. Root, Conference of Inter-Church Workers, Chicago, September, 1918.

Two other facts may be cited to indicate the foregoing trend. The first of these is the prevalence of the denominational changing on the part of church members, both lay and clerical. The former is now widespread. In a great number of the Protestant churches are to be found persons who formerly belonged to other denominations.[1] Matters of convenience, association, personal tests, and choice are often given more consideration than denominational loyalty. Effusionists frequently become members of immersionist denominations, and vice versa. Neither polity nor creed is given much consideration any more. There is frequent exchange of members between churches that have the congregational polity and those that have the ecclesiastical. While formerly great stress was laid on denominational differences, the general feeling among the laity now is that it is of little or no concern.

There is also quite a great deal of changing of denominations among ministers. Many who formerly were Methodists are to be found occupying Congregational and Presbyterian pulpits. The author knows several instances and also the converse. There are exchanges among the other denominations as well. Such practices show a breaking down of denominational differences and a trend toward unity.

The rise of the community church probably demonstrates the trend more specifically and concretely than any of the organizations. This survey revealed the fact that community churches, though not very numerous at the present time, are to be found in all parts of the country,[2] and that they are rapidly increasing in

[1] For illustration see chap. vi.

[2] See map showing location of community churches, p. 52.

o Location of Community Church

number. It will be seen later that actual denominational unity is to be found in these churches.

The foregoing sets forth in a brief and very general way the situation of denominationalism in this country—its results and the trend toward denominational unity. This has been done in order to give the proper background for a more extended and comprehensive study of the latest movement in this direction, i.e , that of the community church, to which the remainder of this study is devoted.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMMUNITY CHURCH—A DEFINITION

The term "community church" has occasionally been used in the preceding. It is comparatively new. It has been coined to designate the new type of church that has arisen within the last decade. This new type of church is the product of the present social movement, some subdivisions of which are the movements for conservation, co-operation, economy, efficiency, liberty, and democracy.

The church has always been influenced by the social changes that take place in various respects in human society, and sooner or later seeks to adapt itself to these changes. It seeks to interpret its function to society according to the existing social conditions and to adapt its activities to the needs of those conditions. It has often found it necessary to change profoundly both its point of view, or interpretation of its mission, and its methods of administration. The rise of the community church is an illustration of this fact. It is a new type which is seeking to adapt itself to the existing social situation so that it may function efficiently in it and fulfil its mission according to the present interpretation of that mission.

It may be said that both the form and the function of this new type of church are still in the process of becoming. Hence there is at present no generally accepted definition or conception of it.[1]

[1] One of the things undertaken in this investigation was to discover just what constituted a community church. Letters were written to

However, many attempts at definition from the point of view of motive, mission, function, method of ministration, denominational relationship, etc., were secured from various sources. These attempted definitions are presented here in rather extended detail in order that a clear conception of this new type of church may be had, and that a comprehensive definition of it may be formulated.

One of the earliest terms suggested for the new form of church that was seen must evolve, or to be evolving to meet the social situation, was the "Municipal Church." Dr. Washington Gladden said:

> No single church [denomination] can represent Jesus Christ to the people of any municipality when each church is doing its own work in its own way and ignoring all the rest. Jesus Christ is not represented by any such condition of things as that, and all the world knows it. When the separated bands lift up their voices to speak for Him, nobody pays any attention. They are not speaking for Him. They can never represent Him to the

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persons in high positions in various denominations for the names of community churches and the addresses of the pastors of such churches in their denomination. These pastors were either personally interviewed or corresponded with regarding their churches as to when and why they were organized as community churches; the underlying motives for their organization; the number of different denominations represented in the present organization; the present denominational relationship, their activities, and equipment for carrying them on. In brief, a careful study of the whole situation was made from the standpoint of denominational relationship, underlying motives, purposes, and functions. Many books and articles in magazines and newspapers, secular and otherwise, were read. From all these sources it was discovered that there was no uniformity of conception or generally accepted definition of the community church at the present time. There was no agreement as to what constituted such a church, nor was there agreement between the pastors of the various denominations or of the same denomination.

needy multitude. They cannot stand for Him unless they stand together. There is a psychological fact which they cannot too soon recognize. This fact calls for the appearance in every community of the Municipal Church—of an organized body which shall represent the Christian Community and thus enable them to represent their Lord and Master. . . . .

It is highly probable that the first Christian churches were Municipal Churches; that in every town or city there was one church with several local congregations, each with its elder or deacon, and all co-operating in the work of the city. The need of the hour is a restoration to every town or city of the Municipal Church. It ought to include all Christians of the municipality; every Christian organization should be represented in it.[1]

Another suggested name was the "Community Cathedral Church." It is found suggested in the following:

One of the greatest encouragements of today, however, is that so many churches are getting the Christian point of view. Less is being expended, we trust, in the mere service of dogmas and social cults, and more to making living truth serve men and society. The vision of the Community Cathedral Church with its one minister for vital inspiration and expert administration and his corps of assistants, each a specialist in his branch of work, is coming to be realized.[2]

The third suggested title was the "Parish Church." The following occurs in this connection:

Probably the ideal form of social organization is the parish organization in which the parish is the Geographical unity, each parish having a single church. The Parish Church should be not merely a gateway to the life to come, but it should be the center of all the recreational, cultural and ethical activities of the com-

[1] *Century Magazine*, LXXX, 471.

[2] George Frederick Wells, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, LXX, 22.

munity except those that center in the schools and the home. Its organization should furnish the effective leadership pervading the actual life of the whole people.[1]

A number of churches soon arose in various parts of the country, embodying to a greater or less extent the principles suggested in the foregoing quotations and adopted the name of community church. So numerous had they become and so well known that the Home Mission Council of the State of Washington in its meeting in 1916 recommended the formation of community churches in many communities in the state in order to meet the needs and problems growing out of overlapping and overlooking, of inefficiency and economic waste of the present system of denominational activities. It defined such a church as "a body of Christians worshipping in a certain district, representing all the denominations co-operating with the Home Mission Council and affiliated with one of the said denominations, but affording fellowship and Christian privileges for every Christian within its reach."[2]

A departmental secretary of one of the larger denominations replied to the inquiry sent him regarding the community churches of his denomination as follows: "I understand by a Community Church that you mean a community in which a church of one denomination alone occupies the field."[3] According to this statement any church of any denomination alone occupying one

[1] E. C. Hayes, *American Journal of Sociology*, XVI, 695.

[2] W. S. Prichard, *Christian Century*, September 7, 1918.

[3] Rolvyx Harlan, Ph.D., secretary of rural-life work, American Baptist Publication Society.

field would be a community church. This conception of the community church is generally accepted in so far as one church alone occupying a field is concerned. It is too inclusive, however, and needs to be qualified in some respects. Several pastors of such churches wrote in substance as follows: "This is not strictly speaking a Community Church although it is the only church in the community." The following quotation seems to set forth clearly the conditions as to whether or not a church alone occupying a community is a community church:

> Indeed, it is easily possible for a church to be the only organized religious body in a community and still not be in any true sense of the word a Community Church. A church which lives for itself, for its own upbuilding and strengthening, for its own welfare and party end, is not and cannot possibly be a Community Church. The very word implies rightly that the church lives for the community, for the upbuilding and strengthening of the community in all moral and material ends, for the welfare of the whole community.[1]

One of the qualifications of the definition of the Community Church that is generally accepted is that it is the only church in the community. The term "community" itself is rather a vague one: It may be a very different thing when considered from various points of view. From the point of view of political administration a large city is a community. From other points of view there are many communities in such a city. The same may be said of a county or other political unit. A community is defined in the *Century Dictionary* as: "A number of people associated together by the fact of residence in the same locality, or of subjection to the same local laws and regulations: a village, township, or municipality." A better definition of a community and one that presents the meaning in which it is used in this

[1] G. B. Bauman, Minden, Iowa.

study is as follows: "The community is the larger whole in which the members of a group find satisfaction of their vital needs. The community is as a child might define it, 'the place where we live.' This includes locality, personal and social relationship and vital experience."[1]

Another secretary wrote: "The Community Church eludes definition. We have many churches in Massachusetts which are each the only church in its community. These churches, however, do not meet your test unless they are functioning in the largest possible way for the community."[2] Here we have the qualifying of the former definitions by the introduction of the element of function. This is generally recognized as proper. Pastors of many churches which alone occupied the field, who others suggested were pastors of community churches, replied to the inquiries sent them that they were not pastors of community churches because their churches did not meet the required conditions especially from the point of view of community functioning. That there is no clear and generally accepted definition of this type of church is further substantiated by an introductory paragraph in a recent issue of a magazine on "A Community Church Program."[3] The editor said: "The movement for the Community Church finds many at a loss to define the scope and content of its program." The author of the article presents the following definition of it which he says was prepared by several church leaders and has been adopted by one

[1] Warren H. Wilson, *The Church of the Open Country*, p. 24.

[2] John J. Walker, assistant secretary of the Massachusetts Home Mission Society.

[3] *Men and Missions*, December, 1917.

distinct ecclesiastical body as an end to work to in an overchurched community:

A community church is a fellowship of all those in a community who are professed followers of Jesus Christ, and as such, while they may retain their denominational faith, are united to furnish a medium through which they may foster His spirit and advance His purpose. It seeks to advance the Kingdom of God everywhere, and selects and commends worthy objects for support without primary reference to denominational, or other auspices under which they may be conducted, and engages to transmit contributions to such denominational agencies as the givers, by groups or individuals, may designate. It usually has ecclesiastical connection with one of the established religious bodies, and when so related there are mutual engagements of fidelity to the community spirit and program.[1]

Another conception of the community church is that it is not only to function in the largest possible way for the "community" as such, but that it is to serve all who are in the community. Such a church is to serve—function—for those persons who belong to the particular denomination with which it is affiliated, or if it is an independent church, those who belong to it. It is also to serve all the people irrespective of denomination or church affiliation. This conception, which is generally held by all community churches now, is expressed as follows by one of the pioneer community-church pastors:

The church should have the spirit of the Master, and, wherever there is a man, woman, or child, there is one in whom the church should be interested and whom it should seek to serve, whatever be his character, condition or standing socially. It became my strong conviction that the church has a definite mis-

[1] J. E. McAfee, general secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Missions.

sion to every person within the possible range of its influence and that if the village church would fulfill its mission, it must be a community church.[1]

It was discovered in this study that the community church was conceived by some, not only to serve the whole community, but also to serve the whole life of the community and the whole life of the individual. A few illustrations of this conception of its function follow. The pastor of one such church expressed the purpose of his church to that effect as follows: "We mean to make the church organization meet all the needs of the community in a social, recreational and religious way as circumstances may require."[2]

In the Articles of Corporation of another community church, one of the purposes set forth was: "The support of such enterprises as tend toward the perfect development of children and young people spiritually, physically, morally and mentally."[3]

In a Foreword to a survey that was made by the First United Presbyterian Church of a section of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the pastor states the purpose of that church in part as follows:

To seek to meet as best we can the needs of this section of our city, in both a social and religious way. That the church's chief function is to win the individuals to a personal acceptance of Christ and then build up strong, fruitful Christian character, in each of these, is the basic conviction of my life. However, it is further the duty of the church to be concerned about the social, physical, and mental welfare of its neighborhood. If the church

[1] Harlow S. Mills, *A Country Parish*, p. 17.

[2] Rev. Thomas Gray, Hurricane Community Church, Franklin, Indiana.

[3] C. O. Gill, book in preparation.

is to prove "the salt of the earth" it must not only seek to save men and women out of the world, but to do all t can to make them health giving centers; thus saving the world.[1]

In order that this church might fulfil this conception of its mission and that adequate equipment might be provided in the way of buildings, etc., a careful survey was made of the community in which it was located. This was done in order that the facts as to what the community's exact needs were might be ascertained. One of the distinctions between the older denominational type of church and the community church seems to be that the former seeks to fit the community to itself, while the latter seeks to serve the community by first discovering what the community's actual needs are and then adapting itself to meet those needs.

The pastor of one of the best and most widely known rural community churches, in writing of his work in that respect, definitely points out in the following that this is a fundamental characteristic of a community church:

> Jesus, the head of the church, once said, "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Believing, therefore, that he intended his church to be a ministering church, I began at Du Page with the idea that religion has to do with the whole man—body, mind and spirit; that it deeply concerns the social life, his business life, his education, his amusements and everything else that pertains to a man's well being.[2]

This same conception of the function of the community church was voiced in an address delivered in

[1] *A Social Survey of the Twenty-second and Twenty-third Wards, North Side, Pittsburgh, Pa., April-May, 1915.*

[2] Matthew Brown McNutt, *Modern Methods in the Country Church*, pp. 11–12.

1910 by the president of one of the pioneer community churches in a large city: "Olivet Institute is an unique thing, not alone in Chicago, but in the world. Unique not so much as to the different kinds of work as a whole, but in that it stands for universal ministry in the name of Jesus Christ."[1]

It has been seen that the community church seeks to minister to or to serve the whole community, and all the interests in the particular community in which it is located. In order to function most effectively in that respect, the particular conditions of the community must be known, and the activities adapted according to the facts. Facts are the only sure foundation upon which to formulate a course of action. It has been said: "All reasoning that is valid is based upon facts. The form being correct the reasoning will be as valid, as perfect, and as correct as the facts are that are used in the premises. A prior reasoning has no standing among scientists."[2]

The plan of procedure of ministration, in order to be effective and efficient, must be adapted to the particular situation in the community. No universal plan can be devised that will fit all situations. The particular conditions of each community will have to determine the ways in which the church of that community should function and be most efficient. The facts can be secured only by making a careful study or survey of the community. A survey furnishes a reliable basis for the formulation of plans for ministration. This is the

[1] Andrew C. Zenos.

[2] E. C. Hayes, lecture at University of Chicago, Summer Quarter, 1918.

scientific method and is the one used by the community church. It is a new departure on behalf of the church. It shows how it is seeking to adapt itself to the situations confronting it. It gives the church a scientific basis for rational planning and makes effective functioning possible.

It has been previously noted that one community church made a survey of its field in order to provide equipment for functioning most efficiently.[1] Many such churches were formed only after a survey of the community had been made. The writer knows personally of one such church of which not only the equipment and activities were determined upon the basis of the survey that had been made in the community, but also its denominational affiliation.[2] It was through a survey by the Home Mission Council of Washington, covering over 1,000 school districts, having a total population of 702,291, that it discovered the real situation as to overlapping and overlooking and waste in the expenditure of men and money, the decadent condition of many of the churches in the surveyed territory, the inefficient

[1] The United Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.

[2] The Bryn Mawr Community Church, Congregational, Chicago. A survey was made of the community by some laymen in order to determine the denominational situation of the community. It was discovered that the denominational strength was in the following order: Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, Disciples of Christ, Christian Science, Lutheran, and Quaker. The whole matter was taken up with the City Federation of Churches. There is an agreement between the denominations composing this organization that comity shall be practiced among them and that only one denomination shall occupy a new field. The Presbyterian church, according to the survey, would have had priority. That denomination was not prepared just at that time to adequately care for the situation and graciously conceded the field to the Congregationalists, who built the present community church.

way in which they were functioning, and that it recommended the reorganization of the whole field and the establishment of community churches in various communities. Thus they approached the problems in a scientific manner, and by doing so they were able to organize or reorganize themselves in such a way as to meet the immediate and practical demands of the social situation confronting them in the community. This is probably the reason for the popularity, rapid increase, and efficiency of this type of church.

This study revealed the fact that the community churches are extensively using this method to determine four things: (1) the actual conditions in the community, (2) the needs of that particular community, (3) the activities that should be carried on to meet those needs, and (4) the equipment that is necessary to carry on those activities.

The attempted definitions of the community church indicate that it is not only to be the only church in the community, attempting to serve the whole community and all its needs as revealed by a survey, but that it is to be the center of every interest of the community. This is pointed out in the survey of Lane County, Oregon, in the following statement:

> The need is for a four-square program for community development. We need the type of church that can fairly be called the Community Church, a church which views its mission as primarily building up the community in the interest of the Kingdom; which views it as part of its task to advance every community interest, and to discourage whatever would retard the development, and which is concerned with the organization and direction to good ends the community interest and feeling.[1]

[1] Ayers and Morse, *Survey, Lane County, Oregon*, pp. 67–68.

This point is a little more clearly brought out in the following quotation:

> The church it would seem must take spiritual possession of the entire territory of the activities in a community, proclaiming absolute prerogative of truth in every concrete social interest. The church that fails at this point can at best merely assume a limited social service and must find itself without all its resources for carrying on its limited work.[1]

The point that the community church should be central in every interest of life has many illustrations. Three may be given here. In discussing the remedies for the existing conditions in rural communities, Dr. John L. Gillin gives an illustration that is to the point. He says:

> The thing that is needed is to make the church the center of the social life of the community. . . . . Thought must be taken by leaders to make the church central in every interest of life. I know a community where that has been done. It is a community located south of Waterloo, Iowa, in Orange Township. It is composed of an up-to-date community of Pennsylvania Dutch Dunkers. From the very first they have made their church central. When the great changes of which I have been speaking (the breaking down of denominational differences, changes in frontier life and consequential social conditions) began to occur, the leaders of that community began to take measures to check-mate the attractions of the town for the young people. For example, Fourth of July was made a day of celebration at the church. The people of other country communities were flocking to town by the hundreds, the youths of that community were gathering, in response to plans well thought out beforehand, to the church grounds where patriotic songs were sung, games were played, and a general good time was provided for the young. They have also arranged that their young people have a place to come on Sunday nights where they may meet their

[1] E. R. Groves, *Rural Manhood*, VI, 207–8.

friends. . . . . The church is the center of everything. Is a Farmer's Institute to be held in the community, or a Teacher's Institute? The church is open to it. Is a farm for rent or for sale? At once the leaders get busy with their mail and soon a family from the east is on its way to take possession of it. This country church has not remained strong and dominant in the community just by accident or even by federation. It has survived because it has had wise leaders who met the changes with new devices to attract the interest of the community and make the church serve the community in all its affairs, but especially on the social side. Such thought takes account of the "marginal man" too. The hired man and the hired girls, the foreigner and the tramp are welcome there. No difference is made. There is pure democracy. . . . . It looks after the interest not merely of the hereafter, but the here and now. Under its fostering care they form their life attachments, it provides for their social pleasures, it is the center to which they come to discuss their farming affairs, or whatsoever interests them.[1]

The foregoing is an example of a church promoting the general welfare of the community or being central in every interest of it, in which all the people belong to a peculiar "nationality" and denomination.

The next illustration is that of a church where no such unity either as to nationality or denominations existed, but where there was not only no unity in either of these respects, but wide diversity, and where the officials of the church had not had any such comprehensive vision of its function as in the foregoing instance. While the conditions of this illustration were in a general way known to the author, they are here presented by the following quotation:

A few years ago, Harmony, Missouri, had its little cross-roads chapel. The idea of making the church the center of the social

[1] *American Journal of Sociology*, XVI, 699–700.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN WATERLOO, IOWA

life seemed to some the very pitch of sacrilege. But Rev. C. R. Green had the vision and the heart to undertake it, and he has led his five-hundred people, within twenty-three and a half square miles into road making, scientific farming, and unity of purpose for the whole community. They have elevated the civic standards for the county. They had an annual homecoming in June, that in spite of the rains, brought 3,000 people into the auditorium, and as many more could not gain entrance. But with its social ideal this church has never neglected the spiritual needs of the community.[1]

The third illustration of this point is that secured from the pastor of the community church at Wauconda, Illinois, some forty miles from Chicago. Wauconda has a population of about 425 in the winter and 3,000 in the summer. This variation of population is due to the fact that it is a tourist resort, being situated on beautiful Bangs Lake. At one time Wauconda had three churches, a Baptist, a Methodist, and a Catholic. When the present pastor took charge of the work in January, 1917, he found "religion on a side street" and the church an inconsiderate factor in the community. A federation had been entered into by the two Protestant churches, but the federated church had not functioned so as to change the indifference of the people of the community, or as to, in any vital sort of way, influence its social life. There was no existing vital relation between the church and the community. Activities to meet the social demands of the community were carried on by organizations outside of the church. The pastor's view of the church's mission was that "it should establish the Kingdom of God in the community"; that it should Christianize the community; that it should make

[1] John F. Cowan, *Homiletic Review*, LXXV, 125.

the community better; that it should promote the welfare of the whole community in every respect. Instead of the church being in no vital way necessary to the community he sought to make it central and indispensable to it.

In order to bring about this change, he sought to establish "friendly relations" between the church and the community. The first step in that direction was by way of forming social and recreational activities for the boys. The Boy Scout work was taken up. Basketball teams were organized. The Baptist church building was fitted up and used as a community house where various social organizations met and carried on their activities. Next a meeting of the representative men of the community was called and a cabinet formed to study the community's needs and devise means of meeting them. This cabinet was composed of representatives of the various interests of the community. The doctor represented the health interest, the principal of the school the educational interest, the athletic director of the school the recreational interest, the pastor of the church the religious interest, and the mayor of the town the civic interest and the general welfare of the community. By means of this cabinet the church established a vital relationship between the whole community and all its interests. The people were brought together to consider their common problems. The church soon established a friendly relationship with the community and began to function efficiently for the community's welfare.

Each representative studied the particular needs of the interest he represented and reported it to the cabinet.

Then the cabinet devised means of meeting those needs. The following are some of the needs that were discovered and provided for: (1) There was no public library or reading-room in the community. A room in the town hall was fixed up and a magazine and book exchange was put into operation. (2) There had not been any provision made for instruction in music. The church and school co-operated and employed a music teacher who gave part time to teaching music in the public schools and part time to training the church choir. One of the rooms in the parish house was fitted out and used for a studio. A large choral club was formed and splendid musicals were given by it. A fine band was organized and frequent concerts were given. (3) The health committee secured illustrated lectures on various phases of health which resulted in some good legislation on sanitation and much needed sanitary action. (4) In order to provide employment for the community, the cabinet secured the establishment of a manufacturing plant that cost $17,000. (5) There was danger of the railroad which connected Wauconda with Chicago being discontinued. A local stock company was organized, and the branch road was bought and is now operated by the community itself. (6) There were four saloons in the city. Many previous attempts had been made to close them. Through the new spirit of community co-operation, brought about by the church, they were voted out.

The foregoing clearly shows that this church was at the center of the life of the community. All these enterprises the pastor considered a part of the church's mission. He said: "I think it the business of the church to bring salvation to the community. What is

salvation? It is the Christianizing of the whole community and every interest of it."[1]

The community church, by serving the whole community and by meeting all the needs of the whole community, fills the growing demand for economy on the part of the church. It may be said that the prevalence of economic waste caused by denominational overlapping and competition is one of the underlying causes for the rise of this type of church. Economic necessity has been a prime factor in the formation of many such churches. What was said about the formation of the federated church of Marion, Kansas, may be said of the formation of many community churches, viz.: "It would not be accurate to say that the motives were exclusively spiritual: church folks, like others, are not strangers to economic expediency. The existing conditions suggested such expediency, for neither church was strong in numbers or dollars."[2]

George Frederick Wells has pointed out in this connection that the outstanding fact in the rural-church movement is the need of co-operation and federation of the rural churches.[3] The people themselves have come to see the enormous economic waste in the present system of church rivalry in the rural communities, and are ceasing to attend and support competing institutions, or are planning schemes of co-operation and federation in certain places.

The same may be said with equal truth of many city communities. The community church prevents

[1] Rev. W. C. Curtis.

[2] W. W. Church, *Christian Century*, May 25, 1915.

[3] *Christian Advocate*, November 6, 1913.

overlapping, duplication of service and material equipment, and expenditure for maintenance. There is economy, moreover, because the church is being used "seven days out of the week." There is also economy in men, the duplication being eliminated. Ministers are set free for other fields. What has been done by federation in one state, according to the following, has been done in many other instances by establishing community churches: "Ten examples in one state have been observed to give each of the formerly struggling and decendent parishes strong and well paid pastors, and, at the same time, to release ten ministers for more needy fields."[1]

Thus we see that the community church brings about economy in a very vital way by preventing the waste of money and man power.

Closely related to the question of economy is that of efficiency. There can be no economy in reality if there is not efficiency. The fact that the community church is the only church in the community, and that it seeks the maximum direct service in behalf of the community, carries with it the implication that it seeks at least to be efficient. This is one of the fundamental objectives of this type of church. If the reports of them be judged according to ordinary standards they will be found to be efficient. Many illustrations of this might be given. Two are sufficient. One is the Church of the Brethren near Waterloo, Iowa, which has already been mentioned.[2] It had eleven members when it was organized. After worshiping in private homes and schoolhouses for twelve years, they put up a building good enough for a city of 50,000 people; they have a membership of 400 and a

[1] George Frederick Wells, *loc. cit.* [2] See p. 66.

Sunday school averaging 325 in attendance.[1] That this church is at the very center of the life of the community and that it is a vital force socially has already been pointed out. It is efficient in every sense of the word.[2]

Another illustration of such a church is one in a town of 536 people in Massachusetts, formed from two struggling churches. Before the formation of the community church the attendance had been 100. It is now 200. There are now 356 of the population connected with the Sunday school. In the four years before the union there had been four additions, and in the same time since the union there have been sixty additions. The pastor's salary has been increased many times.

It has been frequently stated before that the community church is the only church in the community, and, moreover, that it seeks to serve all the people of that community. It has also been pointed out that it includes in its fellowship Christians of any and all of the denominations represented in the community. This would seem to indicate that the community church is one in which denominational unity is a fundamental principle. If the constitutions and by-laws and articles of agreement and incorporation of such churches are examined, it will be discovered that such is really the case. The Preamble to the Articles of Association of the First Church of Collegeport, Texas, is a typical illustration. It contains the following:

WHEREAS, We, the citizens of Collegeport, and vicinity, realize the need of a church in Collegeport, and

[1] John F. Cowan, *loc. cit.* [2] See cut of church, p. 68.

WHEREAS, We belong to different denominations and faiths, none of which have a sufficient number of adherents to support and maintain a suitable church at the present time, and

WHEREAS, The day has arrived when men and women have learned to emphasize their common ideals and service, in the interest of the best and highest citizenship and for the glory of God, we join together and agree to the following articles.

In a bulletin issued by the Massachusetts Federation of Churches on *The Consolidation of Churches*,[1] the following occurs which is to the point: "They may unite with fairness to the local denominations. The resulting church must necessarily be in spirit a Community Church, and catholic and tolerant, flexible and comprehensive in worship and work. Such community churches uniting people of many original faiths, are already happily found in all leading denominations."

Denominational unity is not only a fundamental principle of the community churches. They actually practice it. To present the evidence of this fact here would take us too far afield from the purpose of this chapter. It will, however, be sufficiently presented later.[2]

The basis for such an attitude and practice seems to be well set forth in the manual of another one of these churches:

The groundwork lies first, in the fact that evangelical Christians and evangelical denominations are of a family, and are so much alike that there are no reasons of a vital or fundamental principle to hold local churches apart where the demands of the situation calls for combined effort, and second, in the growing and compelling reasons, the attractive and practical goals that urge co-operative and united Christian effort.[3]

[1] Bulletin No. 1, New Series, second edition, January, 1914.

[2] See chap. vi.

[3] *Manual of the United Churches, Garrettsville, Ohio.*

The foregoing statement as to denominational unity raises the question as to the attitude of the community churches toward doctrine and creeds. The implication is that no doctrinal or creedal test of fellowships is required. Some such churches require that their doctrines shall be those that are common to the bodies that are affiliated with the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The constitution of this organization avowedly declares that it does not require any creedal test for membership.[1] The almost universal practice of such churches is to accept into their fellowship and to dismiss from it to other churches the members of any Christian denomination irrespective of creed or sacramental practice.

This is illustrated by the practice of the Winnetka Congregational Community Church, Winnetka, Illinois, which may be said to be typical in this respect. The following is found in its *Year Book:*

> The differences between denominations, once acute and important, are now no longer for the most part even interesting. The crying need for our day is for a united Christianity, for unselfish and singleminded devotion to the one church of Christ. We welcome, therefore, into our fellowship those from all denominations, and we as cordially dismiss our members to all denominations. We seek to promote the new Christianity which the new day requires and to discourage the old sectarianism.[2]

This church does not require a subscription to any creed as a condition to membership. The following was secured from the same source as the preceding quotation:

> The several creeds of the church are of great historic interest. They present the development and crystallization of Christian

[1] Article V, Section 4.

[2] *Year Book and Directory of Members* (1918), p. 7.

thought at certain stages, but for the very reason that they were the products of special conditions they are unsuitable for final statement of truth. They tend to bind the consciences and stifle the spirit of living men. Therefore, we do not require any one to subscribe to any creed as a condition of membership in our church. "Credo" means "I believe." The great thing is to believe something ourselves, rather than to agree with what others have believed.

The position in this respect is splendidly illustrated by the practice of a church in Ohio. In this church "no member was asked to alter any of his beliefs and any candidate for admission might choose his own method of being received provided it was one used in some evangelical church."[1] When this church selected its pastor his denomination was not known nor announced. It was not regarded as important.

What is said of such churches in Colorado, then, applies to nearly all of them: "A fundamental principle of these organizations is that they have no doctrinal test for fellowship."[2] The author of this statement adds to the foregoing: "I teach them that it is not necessary to believe alike in order to work together and to worship together." This seems to be the prevalent view among such churches. However, some of them of the "denominational type" require an assent to the particular tenets of the denomination with which they are affiliated. They arrange for admitting into their fellowship those who do not wish to subscribe to these tenets, but wish to co-operate and fellowship with them, by means of an "associate membership." Such persons are considered to all intents and purposes real members.

[1] C. O. Gill, book in preparation.

[2] J. Mack Mills, *Christian Century*, March 23, 1916.

As one minister said to the author, "We admit them as associate members and straightway forget that they are such."

The preceding would furthermore indicate that democracy is an important characteristic of such churches. This seems to follow because it seeks to serve the whole community. That this is the case is evident from the fact that all classes of people, irrespective of nationality, creed, or economic status, are found in the membership of community churches. This is illustrated by the Church of the Brethren, and has previously been pointed out.[1] Another illustration is that of the Congregational Community Church at Winnetka, Illinois. In this church are found people of all economic conditions from the section hand on the railroad and the servant girl in the home to the multimillionaire business man of Chicago who resides in the community. Moreover, in this particular church there are affiliated not only people belonging to the evangelical Christian denominations, but also from the Catholic church. Jews are also substantial supporters of its enterprises. Furthermore, these churches are democratic in the sense that each one determines for itself all matters as to doctrine, polity, and activity. They are thus seen to be really democratic.

From the foregoing it is evident that the community church is a new type. It may furthermore be said to be in the process of becoming, i.e., it has not yet reached its final form. It has so far evolved, however, that some of its characteristics are now quite evident. Among them are the following: (1) it is the only church in the

[1] See p. 66.

community; (2) it seeks to minister to the whole community; (3) it seeks to promote the general welfare of the community; (4) it seeks to be the center of the whole life of the community; (5) it brings about economy in ministration; (6) it functions efficiently; (7) denominational unity is practiced in it; (8) it is democratic in spirit and practice.

The community church, then, may be defined as the church which is the only one in a community, being composed of or seeking to admit the representatives of all the various denominations in the community into its membership; which seeks to minister to the whole life of the community and to the whole life of all the people in it, and to do so economically and efficiently.

CHAPTER V

TYPES OF COMMUNITY CHURCHES

This study of the community churches has revealed the fact that great variety exists among them in some respects. Upon careful inspection it was discovered, however, that they lend themselves, in the main, quite readily to classification. Two distinct groups as to types were discovered. They may be classified from the standpoint of types: (1) as to polity, and (2) as to the kind of community in which they are located. There is a third group which is not as distinct as the other two, or as easily classified. It is of so much importance as to warrant rather careful consideration. It has been designated the border-line group, for the churches composing it seem to be of that character, i.e., on the border line of the community church. These groups will now be given further consideration in the foregoing order.

It was discovered that there were three distinct types as to polity. They are: (1) the denominational, (2) the federated, (3) the union types of community churches. The denominational community church is the only one in the community and receives all Christians of whatever name and faith into its membership, and seeks to promote all the interests of the community in a vital way. It retains its denominational affiliation and is subject to the general denominational organization and polity to which any other church of the denomination is subject. Good examples of such churches are

the Congregational Community Church at Winnetka, Illinois, and the Fourth Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

A federated community church is one which is the result of the federation of all the churches in the community—two or more—of different denominations into a single church for all local purposes. It has the community attitude, i.e., it seeks to minister to all the needs of the community. It maintains a denominational affiliation with some denomination represented in the federation, or with some other denomination. An illustration of the former is the Wauconda Community Church, Wauconda, Illinois. It is the result of the federation of the Baptist and the Methodist churches and is affiliated with the Baptist denomination. An example of the latter is the Hurricane Community Church, a federation of the Baptist, Presbyterian, and Protestant Methodist churches. It affiliated itself with the Congregational denomination.

The union community church is one that is alone in the community seeking to function as a church for the whole community, "into which may come every variety of faith and experience," but which is independent of all other ecclesiastical organizations. Such a church may be formed in a community where no church exists, as at Beach, Iowa, or it may be the result of the union of two or more churches as at Collegeport, Texas, or Garrettsville, Ohio.

In respect to the kind of communities in which such churches are located, four types were discovered, viz., the open country, the village or hamlet, the small town, and a community in a large city. The first type

is that of a church which is located alone in the open country. Several such churches were found among which are the Oak Mound Congregational Church near Fargo, North Dakota, the Du Page Presbyterian Church near Naperville, Illinois, and the Woodlawn Baptist Church in Southwest Tennessee.

The second type is illustrated by the community church at Marley, Illinois. It is the only church in a little hamlet consisting of a general store, blacksmith-shop, a schoolhouse, post-office, church, and a few residences. The third type is represented by the community church at Sheridan, Illinois, a small town of some five or six hundred people. The fourth, that of a church in a community, the bounds of which are pretty definitely determined, in a large city is represented by the Washington Park Community Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, which is the only church in a large newly formed residence section. Olivet Institute, located a short distance from the "Loop" in Chicago, in the midst of a community of 25,000 people, is another representative. It is the only Protestant church in the community and has received into its membership representatives of sixteen different nationalities and seventeen denominations, among the latter being 154 Catholics and 3 Jews.[1]

The third group of community churches are churches or fellowships that do not meet all the conditions of the general conception of the community church. They are just on the border line between the older type of church and the newly evolving community type. They are weather vanes, so to speak, indicating the direction

[1] *Olivet Institute, 1888–1913*, p. 100.

WASHINGTON PARK COMMUNITY METHODIST CHURCH
DENVER, COLORADO

the trend is taking in the present changing social situation. In just what respects they are border-line churches may best be observed by presenting their environment, their activities, and their attitudes. Five such churches or organizations have been selected from a much larger number of this type for such presentation. They are all illustrative of the trend toward co-operation, comity, federation, and unity.

The first of these cases that will be given consideration is that of a special religious sect which alone occupies a certain community. Frequently such a group is not composed of one nationality alone, but of several. All the people in the community, however, are of one faith, or denomination. The Catholics have many such communities and churches in the United States. A good example is that of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, near Ashton, Wisconsin. The church is located in the open country, containing seventy church families whose acreage totals over seventy square miles. The following has been said of this church and community:

> The present parish priest has been pastor of this flock for ten years, sharing in their life and problems. The parish property with its classic cut-stone church, rectory, school, and beautiful cemetery, is the gracious human center of this community, serving as a model and inspiration for the people in many particulars.
>
> Series of lectures to the young men of the farms in the school building, by the parish priest, on topics such as "Scientific Agriculture," "Taking the Short Course at the College of Agriculture," "Beautifying the Home Farm," etc., have during the years borne fruit in sending young men to the College of Agriculture and genera'ly raising in the parish the standard of rural economy. In his ten years of residence the priest has with pleasure seen come into the farmsteads, waterworks, modern heating plants, wind mills, gasoline engines, and silos. Ten years ago the piano at the

ST. PETER'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
NEAR ASHTON, WISCONSIN

parsonage was the only one in the parish. Now pianos are common and music pupils are many. With his automobile the religious leader of this great compact parish has the means of daily contact with his parishoners, helping to make a stable community resting upon a stable agricultural and social system.[1]

Another border-line case is that in which a special religious sect, the members of which are all of the same nationality, occupies a certain community and has a church of this type. The Church of the Brethren,[2] which has previously been mentioned and considered at some length, is a good example of this type. It is illustrative of many others. Attention is here called to this type of church, not so much because it is an example of denominational unity, although all in the community belong to the same denomination, as that it is illustrative of the new movement toward co-operation and community action and the new interpretation of the function of the church, i.e., that it is not only to be the center of the religious life of the community, but that it is also to be the promoter of the welfare of every interest that tends toward the welfare of the community. In other words, the church is to be at the center of the whole life of the community and to seek its whole salvation, the social salvation as well as the spiritual salvation of the individual and the community.

Professor Walter Burr says the following of such groups:

Wherever I find an entire community of Mennonites, or German Baptists, or of Dunkards (Church of the Brethren), or of

[1] C. J. Galpin, *Wisconsin University Bulletin*, No. 278, pp. 17–18.

[2] See pp. 66, 67, and 68.

River Brethren, the church is the center of the community life. These particular churches make much of religion and agriculture, and the religion of each becomes a community religion. No one needs to have anything to say in such a neighborhood about the church being a social center, for it is already that by common inclination and consent. . . . . Unity in religious administration brings about unity in other lines; the men of such a community are likely to be found joining hands in production, marketing, and securing supplies, financing farm ventures, building telephone lines and roads, as well as in the more definite social phases.[1]

Another church that may be considered under this classification is the community church of the Leeland Community Center near Harlingen, Texas. This center is under the direction of the Lee Land Company.[2] It is a part of a new experiment in rural-community building. There are now forty families in it. In a pamphlet setting forth the plan of this community the following statement occurs: "Not many rural communities of America have attempted with adequate means and in a comprehensive way to organize their social life and endeavor." The author states that this is the thing that the promoter of this company and his associates are attempting to do. They propose to take cognizance of every need of the community and provide for it in a comprehensive way as a community. Among these needs are mentioned the economic, educational, recreational, religious, social, aesthetic, and hygienic. He says in respect to these interests:

It must not be lost sight of that the purpose of every community is not the production of wealth but the production of men and

[1] *Rural Manhood*, January, 1916.

[2] Lee Land Co., Leeland, Tex.; Dallas, Tex.; Oklahoma City, Okla.; St. Louis, Mo.

women, and that schools and libraries and recreational facilities, religion, a dignified social intercourse, music and art, are social forces the value of which is permanent and which no intelligent community will neglect.[1]

For the purpose of carrying on these social activities, a tract of fifteen acres at the center of the community has been set aside for buildings. The immediate plans call for a community house for social and recreational activities, a community church for the religious development, and a community school for education.

This church is considered here, not only because it is a community church, but also because it is part of an extraordinary situation. It is part of a well-thought-out scheme for a whole community. It is a part of the plan of the promoters which seeks to avoid sectarian divisions and to promote unity and co-operation in the religious life of the community as well as in other respects. In writing of the religious interests of this community the author of the foregoing quotation says:

> The religious interests are those having to do with the religious life of the members of the community and their obligation to spread the principles of Christianity throughout the world. Man is a religious being; he needs God just as he needs bread. Wise community planning will not abandon these high interests to private initiative and disunited and divisive effort. Here also expert leadership and united action are indispensable. Sectarianism is the enemy of religion. If the religious forces of the community are divided the religious life of the community will be impoverished. This is the handicap of the older communities; sectarianism flourishes while religion languishes and dies. To impart these conditions to a new community is the height of

[1] Lee Land Co., Leeland, Tex.; Dallas, Tex.; Oklahoma City, Okla.; St. Louis, Mo.

unwisdom and folly. If a community has to go through a long period of sectarian competition for the purpose of eliminating the weaker sects before it will have a church that will be strong enough to minister adequately to its religious needs, it will show a sad lack of foresight on the part of those who had part in the community planning.[1]

Regarding the community church of this rural community center, the pastor says:

Leeland is to be saved the impoverishment and loss of sectarian division and rivalries. Its worship center will be the Community Church, organized on a broad and liberal basis which preserves all the essentials of the Christian faith, and maintained on a high plane of dignity and efficiency. At the center it will stand in the midst of the other activities, sanctifying all and giving all to the highest ends.[2]

Probably no other event has produced so many changes as the recent war. The church, as has already been pointed out, as well as other institutions and organizations, has attempted to adapt itself to meet the many new conditions that confront it in both general and particular instances. An illustration in the latter respect is shown in the following account:

A concrete illustration on an unified Protestant approach to the men in a cantonment is furnished by the dedication of a fine building in Ayers, Massachusetts, to be operated by the newly formed Christian Federation of the town in which Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Unitarian unite. The cost plus the maintenance for one year will be about $38,000. It has an attractive exterior, stained brown with white trimmings. The main auditorium in the interior is stained a light green, which counteracts any impression of a bare tabernacle. Its equipment includes a large bowling alley, a good supply of shower baths, and similar facilities and a few sleeping rooms, reserved chiefly

[1] Earl Marion Todd, *The Leeland Community Plan.* [2] *Ibid.*

for the ministers who may be working at Camp Devons. For the last six months an excellent work has been carried on, first, in the tent, and then in a temporary building, under the leadership of A. W. Waidle, a veteran and successful Y.M.C.A. worker. Indeed, the establishment may be looked upon as a Y.M.C.A. without the camp but carried on directly by the churches. It is their single but strong arm stretched out to welcome the soldiers who in large numbers come from Camp Devons to the center of the town every afternoon and evening. There they can meet their women friends, write letters, read papers, find wholesome diversion from camp duties and above all the human touch, which counts for more than anything else. Appropriately enough this Christian center is being dedicated this week with a series of attractive meetings designed to impress upon the soldiers and the people of the community the great objective for which it stands.[1]

Here we have another border-line case. It is the united effort on the part of all the Protestant Christians of a community to meet, if not all the needs of the community, at any rate the largest and most important. It is the need of the *extra* community that it is seeking to meet, rather than its own, the community of the army camp. While this organization does not measure up to the definition of a community church previously given, it shows the tendency toward the breaking down of denominational lines and toward co-operation and community of action on the part of religious denominations.

The fifth church of this group is St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church, South, New Orleans, Louisiana. It is a representative of a large and ever increasing number of denominational churches which are not the only churches in the community, but have a community spirit and program. They seek a wider ministry than

[1] *The Congregationalist and Advance* (January 3, 1918), p. 7.

the spiritual needs of their members. They seek to minister to all the people of the community in every way that ministry is needed and unprovided for.

This church is not the only one in the community. There is a small Baptist mission and a small Methodist Episcopal church in it besides a number of large Catholic churches, one of which, St. Louis Cathedral, is the most renowned in the city. It is a denominational church, inasmuch as the pastors and deaconesses are all appointed through the regular denominational agencies. The equipment, costing $150,000, was provided by the Woman's Missionary Council and the city division of the Home Department of the Board of Missions. The annual budget of $16,000 is provided through regular denominational channels. It is a community church in the sense that it seeks to minister to the whole community in which it is located and to the whole life of the community. Its objective is service to the community rather than to its membership, to lift the whole level of living to a higher plane, to provide the more abundant life for all.

It is located in the Vieux Carré, the old quarter of the city. The parish boundaries are the Mississippi River, Canal Street, Claiborne Street, and Elysian Fields. It contains the old civic center, the Cabildo, St. Louis Cathedral, Jackson Square, the Pontalba Flats, the former home of Spanish Royalty, and many other places of historic interest. It contains the old business section of the city. It is popularly called the French quarter. There are a considerable number of French people living within these boundaries, but there are a larger number of Spanish and Italians. There are

ST. MARK'S METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SOUTH, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

many Cubans and Creoles. Nearly one-third of the 30,000 population are Negroes. In addition there are a considerable number of other nationalities, making a polyglot population unlike that found in any other city in the South.

It is the most congested section of the city. Most of the splendid old homes have been converted into boarding, rooming, small-apartment, and tenement houses. The author visited a number of families which lived in one and two rooms. Some rooms had no outside ventilation. Many live over stables. The low elevation—eight feet above sea-level and sixteen below that of the Mississippi River—the humidity of the air, the warm climate, the poor pavement and drainage in certain sections, are conducive to low vitality.

The congestion, the climatic conditions, the polyglot population, the prevalent ideals of this section of the city, confront this church with more serious and difficult problems and a greater need for a virile, constructive, progressive, and comprehensive community program than any other similar area in this country. This is so not only on account of the needs of the community, but because of the lack of agencies to meet the needs.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, recognized these needs some years ago, and the Woman's Missionary Council established St. Mark's Hall, a social settlement at 908 Esplanade Avenue in 1912. A small Mission Chapel was built at Rampart and Governor Nichols streets in 1917. Services were held here in English, Spanish, and Italian. The following daily schedule was in operation at St. Mark's Hall in 1921:

DAILY SCHEDULE

Activities of St. Mark's Hall

908 Esplanade Ave.

Fall and Winter, 1921

Monday	1.	Playground ..... 3:00 to 5:00 P.M. (For boys)
	2.	Sewing Class, Fourth and Fifth Grades ..... 3:30 to 5:00 P.M.
		Missionary Club ..... 3:30 to 5:00 P.M. (For boys and girls from 6 to 10 years)
Tuesday	3.	General Clinic ..... 2:30 P.M.
	4.	Cooking ..... 3:30 to 5:00 P.M. (For girls from 10 to 12 years)
	5.	Home Nursing ..... 7:30 to 9:00 P.M. (For girls 14 to 18 years)
	6.	Athletic Club ..... 7:30 to 10:00 P.M.
Wednesday		Playground ..... 3:00 to 5:30 P.M. (For boys)
	7.	Little Housekeepers ..... 3:30 to 5:00 P.M. (For girls from 8 to 10 years)
Thursday	8.	Clinic, Ear, Nose, and Throat ..... 2:00 P.M.
	9.	Woodwork ..... 3:30 to 5:00 P.M. (For boys from 9 to 12 years)
		Playground ..... 3:30 to 5:30 P.M. (For boys from 12 to 14 years)
	10.	Dental Clinic ..... 4:00 P.M.
		Sewing Class ..... 7:00 to 9:00 P.M. (For young ladies)
	11.	Boy Scouts ..... 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.
Friday	12.	Supply Store ..... 2:00 to 3:00 P.M. (Second-hand clothing for sale)
		General Clinic ..... 2:30 P.M.
		Home Nursing ..... 3:00 to 4:30 P.M. (For mothers and homemakers)
		Playground ..... 3:30 to 5:30 P.M. (For boys)
	13.	Campfire Girls ..... 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Saturday
Woodwork.....9:00 to 11:00 A.M.
(For boys from 12 to 14 years)
Sewing Class, First and Second Grades.....10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
Playground.....2:00 to 5:30 P.M.
(For boys)
14. Sewing Class, Third Grade.....3:00 to 4:00 P.M.
15. Citizenship Class (month of October)....8:00 P.M.

Office Hours.—Daily except Sunday, 8:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., 2:00 to 6:00 P.M.
Sunday hours.....3:00 to 5:30 P.M.
Nurse's office hours.....8:00 to 10:00 A.M. daily
(On duty for vaccinations, dressings, and other services usually rendered by a nurse)

Some idea of the service rendered may be gained from the report of the head resident for the same year which follows:

ST. MARK'S HALL

REPORT, 1921

Number of families reached	2,010
Number of visits made	4,610
Number of visits received	4,050
Number of meetings attended	388
Number of meetings addressed	75
Number enrolled in Woodwork	63
Number enrolled in Basket-ball	155
Number taking shower baths	516
Number enrolled in Boy Scouts	47
Number enrolled in Cooking	25
Number enrolled in Sewing	97
Number enrolled in Kitchen Garden	31
Number enrolled in Camp Fire	25
Number members of Athletic Club	137
Number members of Woodwork Club	30
Number enrolled in Home Nursing	42

REPORT, 1921—*Continued*

Number times Supply Store was open	28
Number of general clinics held	84
Number of ear, nose, and throat clinics	32
Number of dental clinics	3
New cases treated	722
Returned cases treated	1,697
Treatments given by the nurse	1,294
Vaccinations	345
Hospital patients	75
Families reached through the clinic	1,674
Total number patients treated	4,058
Relief given to families	25
Bible readings in homes	243
Cottage prayer meetings	72

Playground open every day except Sunday

On Sunday a Sunday school was held at 9:30 A.M.; preaching services in English at 11:00 A.M., in Spanish at 4:00 P.M., and in Italian at 8:00 P.M.

The work has grown so rapidly that St. Mark's Hall was entirely inadequate to meet the needs. The church was also too small and poorly equipped. The new equipment, consisting of three units, a church, a women's building, and a men's building, is now under construction.[1] When this is completed it will make possible the attainment of the objective as stated above, service to the whole community in every respect in which there is need of service and which is not provided for.

Many other border-line cases show something of the various kinds of attempts being made by the churches in different communities to meet their particular problems. An instance is at Granite Falls, Minnesota, where two churches of different denominations employ

[1] March, 1922.

the same pastor. He gives half of his time to each church and preaches in each on alternate Sundays. Another case is the union church in the American Colony at Cristobal, Panama, Canal Zone, in which all Protestant Christians are affiliated and work together, but retain their membership in their respective home churches in the United States proper.[1] They, as well as all the other types of community churches, are all examples of the trend toward unity on the part of the Christian people, in order to eliminate overlapping and inefficiency, and to bring about economy, co-operation, and efficiency in ministration.

[1] This church seems to be an example of what has been called a fourth type of community church, and has been described as follows by Alfred Williams Anthony, chairman of the Committee on State and Local Federation of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America: "A single society may be organized and called a church or otherwise, which receives its membership, members of many churches, without requiring them to sever existing relationships, and, in that community, performs all the functions of a local church, when in fact, it is an organized body of individuals who are members of other churches."

CHAPTER VI

ACTIVITIES OF COMMUNITY CHURCHES

In the two preceding chapters a few of the activities of the community churches have been described. They were presented as illustrative material of what such churches really are, and to make clear the distinction between the various types. In this chapter a more extended and comprehensive presentation of them is made. This is done because they reveal just how such churches seek to minister or function in order to meet the needs of the particular community in which they are located. It is by this means, partially at least, that they bring about the denominational unity that is found in them. It may be stated, moreover, that herein probably is to be found the basis or norm for denominational unity, and that this is the chief significance of the activities of such churches as concerns this study.

The activities of community churches will be considered under two subdivisions: (1) general activities, (2) specific activities. Under the former they will be considered briefly and in a very general way, setting them forth in rather broad, general outlines, and under the latter some of the specific activities carried on by some particular churches that are typical are presented.

1. *General activities.*—The activities of the community churches which have already been given were of two kinds, individual and social. That is to say, some of them concerned individuals and individual welfare primarily, while others were more particularly

concerned with groups and group welfare, i.e., with the larger, more general social welfare. The general activities of the community churches are largely of the latter character. They are such that "the content of the religious consciousness of the community may become socially efficient, and attain unto its fullest and completest expression."[1]

They are such that they "serve the community in progressive, vital community building as one institution among many others working for a common end."[2] Again they may be said to be such that the following social conception of religion may be realized: "Modern religion is lined up with other social forces in a definite attempt to deal constructively with man's material welfare as well as his spiritual nature and recognizes that a good material environment is conducive to the development of the best mental and moral life."[3]

Since their general activities are along broad, social rather than individual lines, they are such as seek to correct the following described conditions:

> The great limitation of the church lies in the fact that it has stood for the theory that personal salvation is something that can be attained first of all and independently of social service. It has thought of brotherly love and Christian living as simply an expression, or as an effort, of one's being a Christian instead of a veritable means of growth in the Christian spirit. The church in its various denominations has built up on this basis a series of detached societies within the community whose main purpose at best is little more than cultivation of Christian brotherhood,

[1] H. E. Jensen, *Social Idealism and the Unification of Religious Forces*, p. 28.

[2] Charles Cole, *Survey*, XXXI, 327.

[3] Paul L. Vogt, *Introduction to Rural Sociology*, p. 309.

each in its own little social group. While suggestions are not lacking in live churches that the spirit of Christ must be brought through the church to the community, there is still too much detachment, too much the idea of saving the individual merely by bringing him into the denominational fold and too much the idea of the church as a thing apart instead of an acting force in the social group.[1]

The general activities of such churches in rural communities as revealed by this survey are succinctly put in the following: "Everything, indeed, that pertains to the needs and general welfare of the rural community may find substantial encouragement in a live social center country church."[2]

In as far as those located in the city are concerned, their activities in this regard are such as will promote:

(1) The welfare of the inhabitants of the city; education, industrial prosperity, public health, public recreation; (2) the beauty of the city; its parks, streets, institutions, monuments, public buildings and conditions of living; (3) the better conditions and hours of labor and the standard of living; (4) the protection of children and youth, and (5) honest and democratic government.[3]

The following activities were outlined by a general board secretary of one denomination as the program of such churches:

The presentation of the Christian message; the advancement of religious culture; the raising of benevolences for both local and general purposes; the promotion of education in the community; the provision for the opportunity for intelligent discussion of the economic, civil, and general social problem; the promotion of

[1] Irving King, *Religious Education*, XIII, 103–4.

[2] *Men and Religion Forward Movement*, VII, 209.

[3] Charles Cole, *loc. cit.*

musical education; the promotion of proper amusement, entertainment, and recreation for the people of the community, and the training for good citizenship.[1]

In brief, the general activities of community churches are largely social in character, and relate to the whole community and all the people in it. They seek to promote the general welfare of the whole community and all the people in it. Such churches seek to "have something to say and something to do with everything that goes to make up the life of man" and the community.

2. *Specific activities.*—It may be said at the outset of the consideration of the specific activities of the community churches that there is a great variety in this respect among them, and that there is uniformity only in a very general way. This is necessarily so, for, as has been previously pointed out, such churches seek to adapt their activities to the needs of their particular communities. Since there is great variation in communities, there is necessarily great variation in the particular activities carried on by these churches. For instance, there is much difference between the specific activities of such a church located in a rural community and one in a densely populated foreign section of a large city, or between those of an industrial community and of a splendid residential section of a city. It is quite true that there are some specific activities that are common to all of them, such as the devotional services, preaching, Sunday school, raising benevolent contributions, etc. In the main, however, there is as much variation in this respect as there is in the communities themselves.

[1] J. E. McAfee, Presbyterian Board of Home Missions.

Nevertheless, while the above is true, the specific activities of these churches lend themselves to grouping and may be classified as follows: (1) devotional, including preaching, prayer meetings, young people's meetings, etc.; (2) educational; this is both "sacred" and "secular"—not only is instruction given in the Bible and religious literature, but in many instances it also is given in the more general branches of education, such as language study, and frequently in industrial and vocational activities; (3) recreational, such as taking up Boy Scout work, Camp Fire activities, forming athletic teams of various kinds, and having contests between local and other such groups; (4) social: (*a*) in the sense of providing amusement and entertainment, such as special social events for special groups and the celebration of certain events by all the community, or even providing programs and using moving pictures; (*b*) in the sense of community-welfare activities varying from good roads to household economics; (*c*) in the sense of social service, including infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and community health; (*d*) in the sense of supporting movements for social betterment that are state, national, or international in scope, such as the prohibition movement, Red Cross relief work, etc.

No attempt is made here to show just how many community churches are carrying on certain specific activities, but some of the activities of typical ones are given which reveal: (1) how varied these activities are; (2) how such churches have sought to adapt themselves to the needs of their particular communities in order to function efficiently for them; and (3) what their relationship is to denominational unity.

Mention has already been made of the Church of the Brethren near Waterloo, Iowa, and of the Du Page Presbyterian Church, near Naperville, Illinois, and of the Greater Parish of Benzonia, Michigan, and some of their activities.[1] Another may be here considered that is a good example of both the activities in rural communities of such churches and how they seek to adapt themselves to meet the needs of their communities. It is located in a community consisting of 220 families, containing eleven square miles, and having one little village. There were formerly twenty-four churches in the area representing eleven denominations. The situation, in part, is as follows:

> By a chain of somewhat unusual circumstances, after years of shameful history, the village field has been left practically to three churches forming a charge under one pastor. Left alone in the field, in a few months these churches felt the air clear and received a challenge for a new motive and more worthy objective. These things it was seen must mark the progress of the church under such conditions. First, it must be a Community Church with sectarianism buried; second, it must present and practice the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and really vitalize men, building them into a living brotherhood; this church must serve the community in progressive, vital community building as one institution among many others working to a common end.[2]

In order to meet the needs of this situation the following activities were undertaken: (1) "Evangelism was accepted as the heart of the task, but the evangelistic program had for its fundamental object the making of

[1] C. J. Galpin, *Types of Rural Churches* (American Baptist Publishing Society, Philadelphia) gives several illustrations of such churches and their activities.

[2] Charles L. Cole, *loc. cit.*

community and world builders and not mainly the lengthening of the church roll." (2) Community service was taken up by the young people and resulted in providing a social center consisting of a reading-room, a library, and a restroom. These were free to all. (3) The young people substituted amateur plays and other amusements for questionable moving pictures and vaudeville performances. (4) The adults took advantage of the extension lecture service of state universities and secured free lectures on many subjects vital to life, such as health, sanitation, and tuberculosis, lectures to men by physicians, lectures on rural schools, scientific farming, community building, and special lectures of interest to the young people. (5) A Farmers' Club was formed. Its program includes the consideration of such subjects as good roads, consolidation of schools, social reforms, scientific farming, farm co-operation, providing adequate intellectual stimulus, social and recreational life, sanitation, and making the home and country beautiful. (6) A pipe organ was secured by the enthusiastic contributors of the whole community.[1]

These activities were made possible by the union of the eleven denominations in the community. A further result was a church of 360 co-operating workers instead of 250 contending sectarians. Moreover, instead of several little Sunday schools enrolling less than 200, there were over 500 enrolled in the one church. The funds for meeting all expenses of the church are raised by "a community budget method," and no collections are taken at the church.

[1] Charles L. Cole, *loc. cit.*

The activities of the Rollo Community Church are worthy of consideration. Six years ago this church was a typical "limping country church" in the open country, having a membership of sixty-five. Since that time a community center has grown up, the principal public institutions of which are the township school and the community church. The former cost some $45,000, and the new church was built at an outlay of over $20,000. The equipment of these two institutions represents now about $100,000. The membership of the church now is 150, and the annual budget has risen from $750 to $2,000. The work of the school is very closely related to that of the church. The minister says of this relation: "It is hard to define the line which separates the church and the school—it is merely a technical division."[1]

This church is the only one in the township, and its membership is composed of farmers, with the exception of the teachers of the school and the few business men living at the center. The congregation is made up principally of farmers, and the work, services, and program of the church center around the needs which go with agricultural life. The first aim of the minister was to get the farmers to attend a country church. In order to do that he sought to create an atmosphere which best fitted their frame of mind and provide such services and activities as would meet their problems. Writing of these activities the minister says:

> Let me set down here the various activities which are carried on by the church and the school, for I do not separate them in their efforts. Understand, please, that the church officials work

[1] Rev. H. H. Pitman.

in harmony and look upon the interests of both institutions as the interests of the whole. Following is a list of the activities and where they are carried on:

1. At the School—Athletics, lecture courses, literary societies, short course, May Festival, Country Club meets here also.

2. At the Church—Preaching services, Fall Festivals, Sunday School, motion pictures.

3. At both Church and School—Dramatics, entertainments, bazars, socials, parties, and special meetings, such as Christmas, Fourth of July, Memorial Day celebrations at which addresses are delivered by noted men and women.[1]

He furthermore says:

We do not emphasize the institutional feature at the church for these are taken care of adequately at the school. We do co-operate in every way and use the channels of the church publicity to form sentiment in favor of the work at the school. We aim to emphasize the distinctly religious at the church and the more secular, if one cares to make that distinction, at the school. In fact, I deliver some of my more secular addresses in the school auditorium. The other night I addressed 250 farmers at the school auditorium. Many of these men had never been in the church. . . . . Six of the teachers have definite work in the church activities and I lead the chapel services on Monday and share in the school work in various ways.[2]

A Young Men's Club was recently formed in connection with this church. Its purpose is set forth as follows: "To further all good causes in Rollo Community." This they are attempting to do through the channels of the church in their Sunday-evening programs. In a bulletin of the church the following is found which presents the activities of this club:

From 7 to 10 o'clock Sunday evenings the church will be open and comfortable for all who desire to come. The different organizations of the community will serve light refreshments to all who

[1] Rev. H. H. Pitman, letter to Irving King, November 8, 1917.

[2] *Ibid.*

come. Some will look after your comfort and your social needs; the young women of the church will care for babies and sleepy children in a nursery provided while fathers and mothers enjoy themselves through the social and program hour. After an hour of fellowship the auditorium will be thrown open for the evening program which will be a wholesome, democratic and inspirational character. Through the service and guidance of the National League for Wholesome Motion Pictures, the best in drama, tragedy, scenic, comedy, patriotism, history and religious and moral teaching will be brought to the people. The cost of securing this course of pictures makes it necessary to charge a small admission fee which will not be objectionable to any one who appreciates the best and wishes to support it. The program will be enhanced greatly by the local contributions from our various musical organizations and readings, with now and then a short talk by some member of the community.

Of the attitude of the community toward the church the pastor says: "There is a very fine attitude toward the church here, and there has been a steady movement toward the support of its program."[1]

This church, with its activities, is typical of a number of community churches located at township centers and is a good example of how such a church seeks to adapt itself to the needs of the community in which it is located.

The activities of the Congregational Community Church of Winnetka, Illinois, are illustrative of those carried on by community churches located in suburban communities. Winnetka is a suburb of Chicago, being about thirty miles from the "Loop," and has a population of approximately 3,000 people.[2] The present

[1] See note, p. 106.

[2] The population is quite cosmopolitan. There are a number of small business concerns which are necessary to meet the local needs. There are some local professional men and quite a number of laborers. Then there are the wealthy business and professional men, whose business is carried on in the "Loop" in Chicago, and their families.

church was built in 1905. In 1911 the membership was 167, and 526 in 1919. In addition to the church there is a splendidly equipped Community House erected some nine years ago at a cost of $25,000. The purpose of this building is set forth as follows: "Community House is dedicated to this community as a center for wholesome recreation, for the development of strong bodies and alert minds, for social opportunity, for the inspiration of moral integrity and the promotion of all that makes for noble character and Christian Citizenship."[1]

All the activities except the preaching services are carried on in the Community House. Through it the foregoing purposes are sought to be attained and the church seeks to minister to the whole community in every way that ministry is needed—to the children, youths, mature men and women, and old—to everyone irrespective of creed or nationality. There are seventeen denominations represented in its membership, and sixteen nationalities are included in its ministry.

There are a great many activities carried on at the Community House. Each one is under the careful supervision of a trained leader. The schedule on page 110 presents them in a general way.

In addition there are a number of special clubs and organizations having their own particular activities, such as the Preparedness Club, consisting of young men between sixteen and twenty-two; the Friendship Circle, the members of which are the domestic servants in the home; the Trier Horticultural Society, the Dramatic Club, the Boy Scouts, the Camp Fire Girls, the Men's Brotherhood, the Women's Missionary Society, Neigh-

[1] *Community House, Winnetka, Illinois, 1912–1913*, p. 3.

WINNETKA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WINNETKA, ILLINOIS

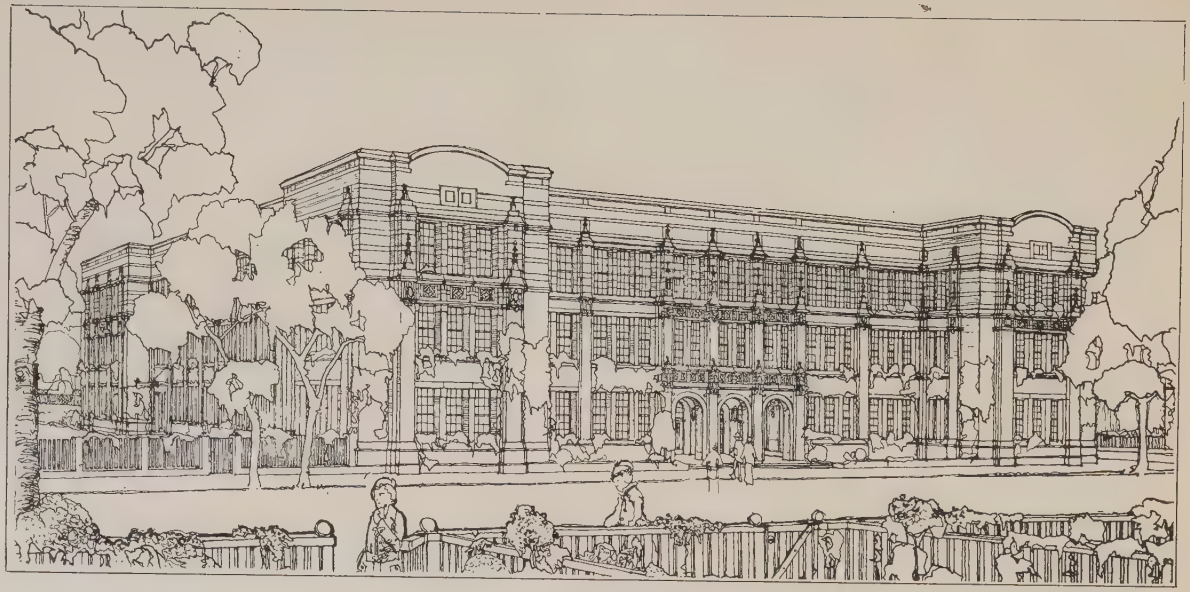
SCHEDULE FOR COMMUNITY HOUSE GYMNASIUM

Small boys, not over seven, Monday and Thursday	3:45– 4:15
Small girls, Monday and Friday	4:15– 5:00
Older girls, Monday and Friday	5:00– 5:45
Young women, Tuesday	7:30– 8:30
Friendship Circle Girls, Tuesday	8:30– 9:30
Women, Tuesday and Friday	10:00–11:00 A.M.
Boys, not over eleven, Tuesday	4:45– 5:00
Boys, over eleven, Tuesday	5:00– 5:45
Young men, Monday and Thursday	7:00– 8:30
Men, Monday and Thursday	8:30–10:00
Social dancing for children, Wednesday:	
For boys and girls seven to ten years	4:15– 5:00
For boys and girls over ten	5:00– 6:00
Baseball, Wednesday	7:30–10:00

Saturday, 2:30–4:00, Boys' Game Period
Saturday, 4:30–6:00, Volley Ball for Men

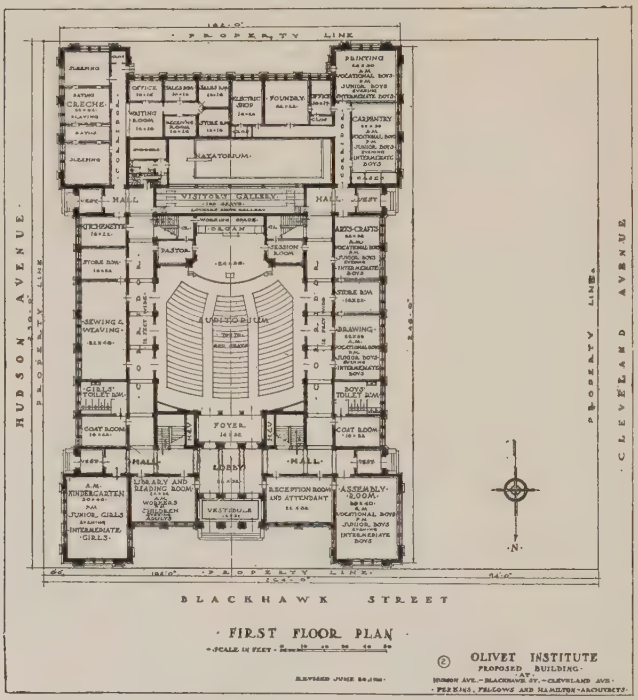
borhood Club, Mothers' Club, Orchestra, Red Cross, etc., with activities such as are usually carried on by these organizations. A visiting nurse for the community has her headquarters in the building. During the war special war-work activities were carried on. A volunteer training corps was formed with headquarters at the Community House. Within a week after the United States entered the war a War Emergency Unit was formed, and so well was it organized that all men of military age in the community could be reached within one hour.

Motion pictures are shown every Friday evening. So well has this feature of the work been carried on that no other pictures are shown in the community. Billiard rooms are open to the members of the Community House. Special Sunday evening services are held in the gymnasium at 8:00 P.M. These are of a rather popular



OLIVET INSTITUTE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

order, consisting of singing, reading, addresses on popular subjects, moving pictures, etc. There are many club-rooms in the building available for special meetings of

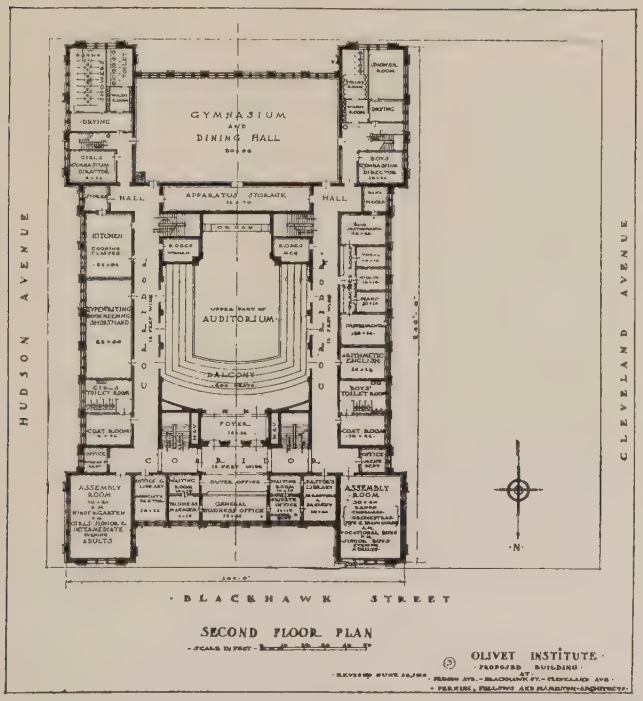


OLIVET INSTITUTE. FIRST FLOOR PLAN

groups. A reception room, containing the best magazines, is open all day and each evening.

Such are some of the many activities carried on by this church. It considers that all of them are within its province, and they are looked upon as a part of its program of religious education.

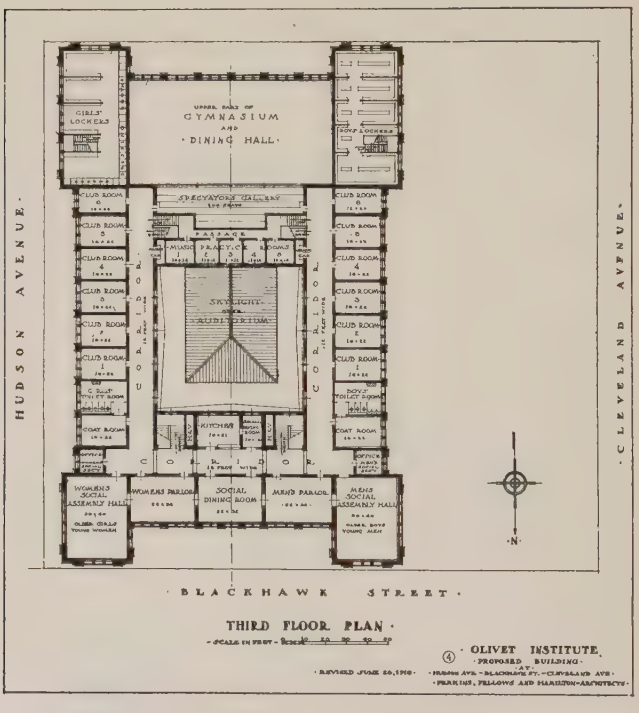
One other community church and its activities may well be considered here—Olivet Institute, Chicago, Illinois. It is typical of community churches which are



OLIVET INSTITUTE. SECOND FLOOR PLAN

located in a densely populated section of a large city. This is the only English-speaking Protestant church in a ward of 64,000 people. There are 25,000 people within a half-mile radius of the church. The community is largely composed of Sicilians, Italians, and Hungarians. In the main, they are common laborers, their wages

ranging from $10 to $15 per week. Not only the men, but many of the women, work regularly. The institution which seeks to minister to this great number of people began as a mission in 1888. It was chartered as



OLIVET INSTITUTE. THIRD FLOOR PLAN

Olivet Institute fourteen years ago. So rapidly has it grown that it now has a church membership of over 1,200, with a corps of fifteen full-time paid workers, fifteen part-time paid workers, and thirty volunteer workers. Moreover, it has under ways plans for a new

OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED AT OLIVET INSTITUTE TO BENEFIT ONE'S SELF AND TO HELP OTHERS

STAFF MEETINGS

Name of Organization	Place of Meeting	Time of Meeting						
		Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
Office staff	444 Blackhawk St.	.....	8–9	8–9	8–9	8–9	8–9	8–12
Promotion staff	444 Blackhawk St.	.....	8–9	8–9	8–9	8–9	8–9	8–12
Resident staff	1500 Hudson Ave.	.....	8–9	8–6	8–6	8–6	8–6	8–12

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT

Name of Organization	Place of Meeting	Time of Meeting						
		Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
		Athletic and Social						
Olivet Boosters	1444 Hudson Ave.	.....	.....	7:00	.....	.....	.....	.....
Olivet Rooters	1444 Hudson Ave.	.....	.....	.....	7:00	.....	.....	.....
Game room	459 Blackhawk St.	.....	7:00	7:00	7:00	.....	7:00	.....
Ord. Amer. Youth	1452 Hudson Ave. (rear)	.....	.....	.....	7:00	.....	.....	.....
Girls' Gym. class	1408 Larrabee St.	.....	7:30	.....	.....	.....	4:00	.....
Iroquois Club	459 Blackhawk St.	.....	7:00	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
		Manual and Mental						
Kindergarten	665 Vedder St.	.....	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	.....
Kindergarten	1452 Hudson Ave.	.....	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	.....
Housekeeping	665 Vedder St.	.....	3:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Housekeeping	1452 Hudson Ave.	.....	3:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Little Neighbors	665 Vedder St.	.....	3:00	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Red Birds	665 Vedder St.	.....	3:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Little Neighbors	1452 Hudson Ave.	.....	3:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Woman's Auxiliary	1452 Hudson Ave.	.....	10:30 (1st)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Practice hours	665 Vedder St.	.....	3:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Stories, plays, and games	1452 Hudson Ave.	.....	4:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Italian Choral Club	665 Vedder St.	.....	.....	.....	6:30	.....	.....	.....
Ital. Handcraft Club	665 Vedder St.	.....	.....	.....	7:30	.....	.....	.....
Italian Men's Club	665 Vedder St.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	7:30 (1st & 3d)	.....
Manual training	459 Blackhawk St.	.....	7:00	7:00	7:00	.....	7:00	.....
Foundry classes	459 Blackhawk St.	.....	7:00	.....	7:00	.....	.....	.....
Wood-burning classes	459 Blackhawk St.	.....	7:00	7:00	7:00	.....	7:00	.....
Sewing classes	665 Vedder St.	.....	.....	3:30	.....	.....	.....	.....
Crochet classes	1428 Hudson Ave.	.....	.....	3:30	.....	.....	.....	.....
Camp Fire Girls No. 2	1452 Hudson Ave.	.....	.....	7:00	.....	.....	.....	.....
Open Hearth Club	1452 Hudson Ave.	.....	.....	7:30	.....	.....	.....	.....

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT—*Continued*

Name of Organization	Place of Meeting	Time of Meeting						
		Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
		Manual and Mental—*Continued*						
Printing	510 Blackhawk St.		7:00			7:00	7:00	
Practical cooking	1452 Hudson Ave.				10:00			
Boys' Club	665 Vedder St.				3:30 and 7:00			
Sewing classes	1452 Hudson Ave.				3:30			
Willing Workers	1452 Hudson Ave.				10:30			
Star Club	665 Vedder St.				3:30			
Drawing classes	459 Blackhawk St.		7:00					
Girls' Knitting Club	1452 Hudson Ave.				7:00			
Handicraft Club	665 Vedder St.				7:00			
Woman's Club	1452 Hudson Ave.					2:30		
Mothers' Club	665 Vedder St.					2:30 (3d)		
Entertainments	1440 Sedgwick St.						7:30	
Olivet Institute Men's Club	1452 Hudson Ave.							8:00
		Instrumental and Vocal						
Quartette	1500 Cleveland Ave.	9:30						
Y.M.P. Choir	1500 Cleveland Ave.	10:05						
Y.M.P. Choir	1440 Sedgwick St.	12:00						
Graded School Orch.	1440 Sedgwick St.	2:30						
Bugle Corps	1452 Hudson (rear)							
Fife and Drum Corps	1452 Hudson (rear)							
Piano lessons	1500 Cleveland Ave.		12–9	12–9	12–9	12–9	12–9	9–6
Daily practice hours	1500 Cleveland Ave.	7:30 to 8:30, 3:30 to 7:00 P.M. daily						
Violin lessons	1500 Cleveland Ave.			2–8				
Adult band	1440 Sedgwick St.			7:45				
Senior chorus	1440 Sedgwick St.							7:30
Junior chorus	1452 Hudson Ave.							4:30

RELIEF DEPARTMENT

Name of Organization	Place of Meeting	Time of Meeting						
		Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
		Advice and Aid Section						
Interview	510 Blackhawk St.		9	9	9	9	9	9
Employment	667 Vedder St.		9	9	9	9	9	9

RELIEF DEPARTMENT—*Continued*

Name of Organization	Place of Meeting	Time of Meeting						
		Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
		Medical Section Olivet Dispensary						
Confinement cases	1500 Cleveland Ave.	.....	4–5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Children's diseases	1500 Cleveland Ave.	.....	.....	11–12	.....	.....	.....	.....
Medical cases	1500 Cleveland Ave.	.....	8–9	.....	.....	.....	8–9	.....
Eye, ear, and throat cases	1500 Cleveland Ave.	.....	.....	.....	10–10:30	.....	.....	.....
Central cases	1500 Cleveland Ave.	.....	.....	.....	3:30–4:30	.....	.....	.....
Surgical cases	1500 Cleveland Ave.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11–12	.....
Women diseases	1500 Cleveland Ave.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11–12
Nurse	1500 Cleveland Ave.	11–12 A.M. daily and all clinic hours						

Outing Section

Camp privileges, Olivet Camp, Williams Bay, Wisconsin, every day
June 11 to September 4

RELIGIOUS DEPARTMENT

Name of Organization	Place of Meeting	Time of Meeting						
		Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
Catechism School	667 Vedder St.	9:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Bible School	1440 Sedgwick St.	9:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Session Meeting	1440 Sedgwick St.	10:00	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
American Service	1440 Sedgwick St.	10:45	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Italian Service	667 Vedder St.	10:45	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Bible School	667 Vedder St.	2:45	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Graded Lesson School	1440 Sedgwick St.	2:45	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Int. S.E.S.	1440 Sedgwick St.	6:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Int. S.E.S.	665 Vedder St.	6:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Young People's C.E.S.	1440 Sedgwick St.	6:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Adult S.E.S.	1452 Hudson Ave.	6:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Men's Bible Class	1452 Hudson Ave.	6:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Italian Service	667 Vedder St.	7:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
American Service	1440 Sedgwick St.	7:30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Heads of Dept. Council	444 Blackhawk St.	.....	5:00	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Employed Staff Council	1500 Hudson Ave.	.....	9:00 (4th)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Session Meeting	444 Blackhawk St.	.....	7:45	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Finance Committee	444 Blackhawk St.	.....	7:45	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Deacons and Deaconesses	1440 Sedgwick St.	.....	7:45 (2d)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Y.L. Missionary Soc.	Homes	.....	8:00 (1st)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Bethany	729 Rees St.	.....	.....	8:00	.....	.....	.....	.....

RELIGIOUS DEPARTMENT—*Continued*

Name of Organization	Place of Meeting	Time of Meeting						
		Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
Bethesda	1229 Burling St.			8:00				
Esther	724 Weed St.			8:00				
German-Hungarian	659 Blackhawk St.			8:00				
Mizpah	327 Wisconsin St.			8:00				
Mt. Olivet	1502 Hudson Ave.			8:00				
Kindergarten Circle	665 Vedder St.					2:00		
Kindergarten Circle	1452 Hudson Ave.					2:00		
German-Hungarian Aid. Soc	665 Vedder St.					2:00		
Woman's Missionary Soc	1452 Hudson Ave.					2:30 (1st)		
Ladies' Aid Society	1452 Hudson Ave.					2:30 (2d & 4th)		
Jr. Boys' Circle	665 Vedder St.					3:30		
Jr. Girls' Circle	665 Vedder St.					3:30		
Jr. Girls' Circle	1444 Hudson Ave.					7:30		
Confirmation Class	1440 Sedgwick St.					7:30		
Italian Circle	665 Vedder St.					7:30		
German-Hungarian Circle	1500 Cleveland Ave.					7:30		
Laurel Soc. (Int. Girls)	1452 Hudson Ave.					7:30		
Int. Boys' Circle	1444 Hudson Ave.					7:30		
Young Men's Circle	1444 Hudson Ave.					7:30		
Young Men's Circle	1408 Larrabee St.					7:30		
Church Visitors' Circle	1440 Sedgwick St.					7:30		
Officers and Teachers	1440 Sedgwick St.					7:30		
Union Meeting	1440 Sedgwick St.					8:00		
Children's Church	1452 Hudson Ave.		8:15	8:15	8:15	8:15	8:15	
Children's Church	665 Vedder St.		8:15	8:15	8:15	8:15	8:15	
Friendly Bible Class	Homes						2:00	
Swanson Shop Meet	433 Hein Pl.		12:00					
Johnson Shop Meet	1029 Cambridge Ave.			12:00				
Anderson Shop Meet	1029 Cambridge Ave.					12:00		
Wilder Shop Meet	1038 Crosby St.						12:00	

plant in which all its activities may be carried on, which will cost at least $600,000. The cuts, on pages 111–14, will indicate something of the completeness of its equipment. Although Olivet Institute is a denominational organization, being Presbyterian, it seeks to minister to all in the community irrespective of denomination. Its staff is broadly interdenominational, including Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Christian, and at one time a Catholic.

A fairly good conception of the specific and varied activities of the church may be gained from schedules shown on pages 115–18. The cuts and diagrams of the building and floor spaces will suggest how well the building is arranged to carry them on. They will indicate in what ways this institution seeks to minister to all the needs of the people in this kind of city community. This ministry it maintains at an annual net expense of $40,000.

The foregoing has set forth in a rather brief way both the general and the specific activities of the community churches. Typical examples illustrative of the latter have been cited of churches located in rural communities, small towns, suburbs of large cities, and of a densely populated foreign section of a large city. They show how varied such activities are, and just how each type has adapted its activities to meet the particular needs of the community in which it was located. The significance of these activities to denominational unity is pointed out in the following chapters.

CHAPTER VII

THE COMMUNITY CHURCH AND DENOMINATIONAL UNITY

It has been frequently pointed out that there is a great deal of opinion in favor of denominational unity.[1] It is not altogether new. "In fact, we have had it for many years."[2] It has gradually increased and is becoming more general and potential. Some of the many evidences have already been mentioned. A quite recent one was the conference held in Philadelphia in December, 1918, in behalf of organic union of the Protestant denominations in this country It was called by the Presbyterian church and representatives of the various evangelical Protestant denominations were invited. Seventeen responded. The following was said of this conference, which is to the point:

> It was unanimously agreed among us that the great world crisis through which we have passed has laid upon the Christian Church new obligations which we certainly ought not to disregard.
>
> The common ideals and dangers which have come to the front in the great war have developed many forces which we must be quick to conserve. Moreover it was thought that the unanimity with which our American people, in the face of their many different traditions of creed and practice, were able to fuse themselves into one body for the common weal of the nation and the world may be regarded as a prophecy full of hope of what the church might accomplish by coming into a like unity in the interest of that great Kingdom so dear to the hearts of our Master and his loyal disciples.

[1] See chaps. i and ii.

[2] Robert E. Park, letter of January 2, 1919.

This Philadelphia Conference, representing seventeen churches (denominations) emphatically declared that it was plainly in accordance with the divine purpose, and in harmony with the will of Christ, that His church should be one visible body, in order to bear witness to Him among men.[1]

The most recent evidence of this point was the Inter-Church World Movement of North America, "presenting an adequate world program for the Christian Church in the new era." It probably grew out of the conference just mentioned. It included all evangelical Protestant denominations and had a program that called for the raising of $1,000,000,000 to be spent at home and abroad for human betterment in the next five years. It has been hailed by many as the most significant Protestant movement since the Reformation. Its chief significance lay in the fact that it was a movement for denominational unity on the basis of the accomplishment of definite ends. Creed had no place in it.[2] The fact that there is widespread opinion favoring denominational unity is important. It is important because favorable opinion toward any social change makes for the possibility of bringing it about.

The thing of far greater importance that was revealed by this study, however, is that we actually have denominational unity. This latter fact is of great significance because a thing that actually exists has a tendency to create opinion in its favor. This is especially true if it functions so as to meet a real need. This the community church does. Herein, then, lies a thing of vital

[1] Ethelbert Talbot, bishop of Diocese of Bethlehem, Pa., *Ladies' Home Journal* (March, 1919), p. 39.

[2] The movement came to an end in 1921.

significance respecting it. It actually practices denominational unity. By doing this, it makes for opinion favoring such practice, which in turn fosters that practice.

This study discovered abundant evidence that denominational unity is to be found in and that it is practiced by the community churches. Some illustrations have already been given. This point will be further established by a few more concrete examples.

The community church at Quaker Hill, New York, may be cited as an illustration. The condition in that church has been set forth as follows:

> At Quaker Hill, N.Y., a country church was organized which united in itself the whole religious ministry to a population of great variety. So different were the religious preferences of the community that no denomination could serve them, so that an independent church, sanctioned at its organization by the neighborhood congregations which represented five denominations, was formed. Into its membership this independent church received the adherents of eleven different denominations. The presence of so many sectarian groups in the community indicates a situation not altogether unique, but this church united in itself the whole community, and has for fifteen years, without denominational support, maintained that leadership, and served religiously as the center of worship and religious ministry for a territory eight miles long and two miles wide. This church is cited here as an illustration of the religious unity which is absolutely essential in the country community.[1]

Here we have actual denominational unity which has extended over a period of fifteen years, a church in one community containing eleven denominations in its membership, and all united into one church.

[1] Warren H. Wilson, *American Journal of Sociology*, XVI, 685–86.

Another illustration of the actual practice of denominational unity is the Congregational church in Claremont, California. Claremont is a college town. This church has been the only one in that community for over ten years. It now contains representatives of twenty-one different denominations in its membership. The following presents the attitude toward denominationalism of this church:

In 1905 the demands of the Community became so great that it seemed expedient to have a church building that might be known as the center of the religious life of the town. . . . . It was erected and occupied in 1906. . . . . So completely did this church enter into the life of the town and college from the very beginning that no one has ever thought seriously of building another church. Orange growers, professors, merchants, students, tourists of all Christian creeds, all worship in perfect harmony and friendship beneath one dome. Man made theology and speculations are not burning questions in the Claremont Church—Christianity is. Men and women must love God—they must attempt to carry into practice in their own lives the principles of Christ-like service and devotion which Jesus taught. There are no ecclesiastical wrangles. Everywhere there is a spirit of fraternity and good fellowship and sympathy. Life is as large and free and open as in the country. All are welcome who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to serve Him in sincerity and in truth. Sunday after Sunday all through the year, men of mature thought, young people who are seeking truth, crowd the doors of the temple. Twenty-one denominations are represented in this church, besides others attend its services and enter into its worship. . . . . The church seeks to minister to the whole man and the whole woman.

The Claremont church cares little for petty things. It realized that the town in which it is, by the grace of God, so conspicuous a factor, needs a great living, breathing, religious center. It knows that one organization, if properly put together, can minister helpfully to every inhabitant of the district. Those

who love the church best recognize there is room for improvement and those who have worked in its activities see where everything they have done might be strengthened. But, they believe the catholicity of spirit which is the watchword of the college and village has found its fullest expression in the church which has so wonderfully bound together the interests of the town and gown.[1]

A third illustration of the practice of denominational unity is found in the community church situated on the Adirondack lakes. It is in a small summer resort, and services are held only from July until September. This chapel is built of logs and is on ground owned by an inn. The official body is composed of the Church Committee, which is made up of men from all branches of the Christian family. The little church is recognized as the home of all Christians, each respecting all others who seek to have a right faith (as it is given them to believe) and to lead a right life. Ministers as well as lay members of the various denominations commune together in peaceful harmony. Young men have said that while they do not go to any church at home, they do not want to miss any of the simple and sincere services that are held at this church.

Here, then, we have illustrated a form of practical Christian unity, or of unity of Christian worship and effort that appears to be worthy of careful thought on the part of those who are seeking a similar result in the wider field that the world offers.

The simple and sincere union services that are in practical use have been found to make church-going attractive; to bring all Christians closely together in harmony; to make it for all of them to worship and commune together as one family; and last but not least, to bring voluntary contributions into the church treasury making its care a pleasure and not a burden.[2]

[1] Philip Smead Bird, *Missionary Review* (May, 1918), pp. 365–67.

[2] Frank J. Firth, *Outlook*, XC, 821–23.

Near Beach, Iowa, a community church was recently formed which is illustrative of the practice under consideration as is shown in the following statement: "The most notable consideration, however, is the fact that the building was erected and paid for as a community enterprise, with no thought of denominational control, the uppermost idea being that it might serve the interests of all."[1]

There were fourteen denominations (all that were in the community) represented in the church which was formed in 1910 at Collegeport, Texas. The preamble to its Articles of Association has elsewhere been given and reveals the underlying motive for forming a church in which denominational unity should exist.[2] There are twenty denominations represented in the community church of Sierra, California.[3] There are seventeen denominations represented in the one at Winnetka, Illinois.

The best illustration of denominational unity that this study discovered from the standpoint of the number of denominations and nationalities represented in its membership as well as the number of different denominations represented on the staff of workers, was Olivet Institute, Chicago, Illinois. The sixteen nationalities and seventeen denominations represented in its membership illustrate the fact that denominational unity is not only possible, but that it is actually found among people of widely divergent ideas and customs.[4] It furthermore illustrates the fact that it is possible and actually found

[1] W. B. Zimmerman, *Christian Century*, July 13, 1915.

[2] See p. 81. [3] *Outlook*, LXXXVII, 895.

[4] See table on p. 127.

among denominations of as wide a divergency in dogma and creed as Catholics and Methodists, and in polity as Episcopalians and Congregationalists.

This church is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., but "it has on its staff of workers representatives from all denominations—Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, Disciples, etc. We have even had Catholics and Jews on our staff."[1] It well illustrates the fact that denominational unity actually exists in the community church.

Many more illustrations of this kind could be given. This study revealed the fact that actual denominational unity existed in and is being practiced by the community churches, and that church catholicity is no longer a mere Utopian dream, but actually exists in many instances. Such churches seem to fulfil the following prophecy of a coming church made a decade ago:

> The denominational walls are crumbling, the denominational spirit is dying; Christians of all denominations meet outside of the church in common acts of service. The day is nearer than we think when they will be able to meet for work and worship in the same church—a church as Jewish as the ten commandments and as Christian as the Sermon on the Mount; as lithurgical as Solomon's prayer in the Temple and as non-lithurgical as Christ's prayer at the Last Supper, as Calvanistic as the first chapter of Genesis and as Armenian as the last chapter of Revelations; a church so catholic that all its members can come together under the same roof to sing in Chorus Glory to God in the Highest, and can go out into the world and work together to promote peace on earth and good will among men.[2]

[1] Norman B. Barr, superintendent and minister.

[2] *Outlook*, LXXXVII, 895.

In Olivet Institute, 1888–1913, the following table is found:

PERSONS RECEIVED INTO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH

Confession	951
Letter	84
Total	1,035

Nationalities of Members	No.	Denominations of Members	No.
German	587	Catholics	154
Swedish	148	Baptists	19
Irish	26	Methodists	42
Italian (Sicilian)	24	Jewish	3
Jewish	7	Congregationalists	33
Bohemian	11	Presbyterians	82
French	4	Swedish Lutherans	137
Scotch	23	German Lutherans	462
English	158	Christian Church	6
Danish	7	Salvation Army	2
Norwegian	15	Episcopal	55
Welsh	16	Evangelical Lutherans	22
Dutch	2	Swedish Missions	12
Polish	5	Reformed	1
Canadian	1	Waldensian	2
Russian	1	French Lutheran	1
		Norwegian Lutheran	2
Total	1,035	Total	1,035

CHAPTER VIII

HOW THE COMMUNITY CHURCH BRINGS ABOUT DENOMINATIONAL UNITY

From the foregoing it will be seen that the community church, although a result of adaptation to the needs of the social situation, is in reality also a movement toward denominational unity. It has been pointed out that the community churches seek to unite all the denominations in the community into one organic body, and that this is a fundamental characteristic of such churches. Denominational unity is not a mere theory with them. They actually practice it. It is significant because it removes denominational unity from the realm of the theoretical and speculative and places it in that of the actual. Example is always more potential than precept. An actual demonstration of a thing is more convincing than a theory about it. The community-church movement, therefore, by its actual demonstration of the possibility of denominational unity, i.e., the actual practice of it by the community churches, has in it large potentiality for advancing the movement and gives hope that it may actually be consummated.

It has been mentioned before that there is widespread if not universal desire for unity on behalf of the various denominations. This is especially true of the evangelical Protestant denominations. It seems to be generally agreed among them that unity must be brought about if the church is to meet the demands of the new social

situation confronting it, if it is to function efficiently.[1] There is, however, at the present no agreement among them as to how this unity may be brought about, no agreement as to a basis that would make it possible.

It has been frequently pointed out in this study that the community churches are a new type of church in which the various denominations of the community are actually united into one organic body. The questions naturally arise: How do they bring about this unity? What is the basis of it? Is there to be found in this newly evolving type of church a method of approach to and a basis or norm for reaching general denominational unity?

The foregoing were some of the questions considered in this study. The answers following are those that it revealed. They are based upon the actual facts disclosed by the survey made of such churches. It may be said at the outset that there is no one particular factor by which the community churches bring about the denominational unity that is found in them. On the other hand, many factors enter into it, most of which have been mentioned. The truth is that different means and different methods are used by different churches. There is no one rule or principle or method that applies to all situations and conditions. The methods, means, and bases must be adapted to the particular situation and community. This last statement suggests one of the fundamental factors as to how the community churches can and do bring about denominational unity. They adapt themselves to meet the needs of the particular community in which they are located. This is the

[1] Bishop Ethelbert Talbot, *Ladies' Home Journal* (March, 1919), p. 39.

significance of the chapter on "Types of Community Churches." In it was shown that by adapting themselves so as to really meet the needs of the particular community they united the various denominations of the community.

This suggests another factor or element by which these churches bring about the denominational unity that is found in them, viz., service to the whole community. Such churches have as one of their fundamental principles such a service. It is a service to the whole community and to the whole of its life. Such churches seek to be central in a service affecting the whole life of the community. This would in turn suggest another factor, viz., that they seek to serve all the people in the community. They do not seek to serve merely those who belong to a particular denomination, but all of any and every denomination irrespective of creed or polity.

Two other factors suggested above that make for the denominational unity of these churches are the elimination of a creedal or polity test for membership. Such churches do not require a creedal test for membership, and they admit into it people of all creeds or of no creeds whatever. Thus they eliminate two of the elements which have been the most potential in producing division and the greatest barriers to unity. What has been said of church federations may be said with all truth of the community churches, viz., "Church federations are not creed makers. Their virtue lies in comprehensiveness rather than exclusiveness. They deal not with the philosophy of religion, but with its practice; they are designed to exemplify a harmony

and unity of service in the midst of a variety of faiths, form and expressions."[1]

An examination of their articles of agreement, constitutions, and by-laws and their actual practices abundantly establishes the foregoing point. Evidence has elsewhere been given to that effect. Moreover, the foregoing holds respecting the matter of polity. They receive into their membership persons from other churches irrespective of the polity practiced by them.

Another factor that enters into the matter of how the community churches bring about denominational unity is the shifting of emphasis from the "other worldly" to the "this worldly" point of view. As has already been pointed out, these churches place the emphasis on saving the life that now is, the life of the present, the one of this world, estimating that this is the surest way to save the life for the future, for the "other world." It lays emphasis upon the fact that "the soul is, like other things, bound up with the interests of this world,"[2] and that the soul's interests may best be advanced by advancing these other interests of the world. In other words, they have shifted the emphasis from the point of view of saving people for the other world so that they may attain "more abundant life" in it, to that of saving this world so that they may attain the "more abundant life" in it. This is part of the significance of the chapter on the "Activities of Community Churches." It was seen in that chapter

[1] Alfred Williams Anthony, pamphlet, *Suggestions for State and Local Federation*, pp. 9–10.

[2] Robert E. Park, letter, January 2, 1919.

that these churches shifted the emphasis from individual to social salvation.

Another significance of that chapter concerning the subject under immediate consideration is that the community churches, by placing their main emphasis on the common interests of the community, by the promotion of the general welfare of the community, by the attempt to meet the common needs of all the people of the community so that they may have a "more abundant life," have brought about denominational unity in the community. The various denominations, recognizing the need of some service for the welfare of the community, and also recognizing that separately they could not render it, united themselves into one body in order to accomplish the desired end. They have made objective accomplishment and the general welfare their first aim. They lose their own particular denominational lives and discover that they have a new undenominational life—a life of strength in unity. It is upon this basis of objective accomplishment that they have brought about the unity found in them.

Many illustrations of this point came under observation. One may be mentioned here that is typical of many—the Hurricane Community Church near Franklin, Indiana. The pastor of this church has said the following concerning it which is to the point:

> I could give the basis for all growth if I should tell the whole story. I could state a wonderful law underlying all human progress. The Baptists would join the Presbyterians, we might say, but they could not give up their traditions and practices. Likewise, the Presbyterians could have easily linked themselves to the Methodist Protestants, but neither felt able to surrender their identity for that of the other. Finally, all three allowed

another to enter—it happened to be the Congregational Church—and they all sacrificed for the common good. They gave up their distinctive feature for the broader life of this agricultural neighborhood. They merged their interests, pooled their energies and devotions.[1]

The unity of the denominations in this church, then, was upon the basis of the common and general social welfare. It is typical of others. The following quotation is to the point and might be said of it and them:

> Not content with the good that has been done, the Christian workers are seeking most earnestly how to do their best. It is most encouraging to notice the churches changing from being rival ecclesiastical bodies to co-operating community agencies. . . . . Christians have found that they can work together; that they are in agreement in the teachings and practices that are most fundamental. . . . . In the attack upon the common enemy the churches for the time being forget their differences. The undertaking of a common task was the best teacher of co-operation.[2]

Not only have some of the churches learned to co-operate in order to attain a certain objective, but they have gone a step farther and have actually united into one organic body. They have surrendered their particular identity and become a part of a new organization. The various denominations in many instances have learned to use the same method in accomplishing their desired object about which Kipling sings in his poem "The Method Which Will Win" in the war.

> It ain't the guns nor amunition, nor the funds that
> they can pay;
> But close co-operation that makes them win the day.
> It ain't the individual, not the army as a whole,
> But the everlasting team play of every bloomin' soul.

[1] Rev. Thomas Grey.

[2] Roy B. Guild, *National Conference for Social Work* (1917), p. 486.

The churches have learned that it takes team play to win. Moreover, that the team which is most closely united plays best. So it may be said that a prime factor in the basis upon which the community churches bring about denominational unity is that of community service—the basis of accomplishing practical ends. Dr. Warren H. Wilson has said in this respect that "the challenge of community service is the true test of the Christian in all denominations. It calls the men of devout minds together. It disregards the divisions between the conservatives and the liberals. It unites the devout and humble of every sort of name."[1]

It has been this challenge of community of service and of the accomplishment of certain desired practical ends and goals that has been the basis or fundamental principle upon which all organizations that have previously been given which show a trend toward denominational unity were organized. There were certain desired practical ends to be accomplished. Certain persons in certain denominations recognized this. They recognized that their denomination alone could not accomplish it. Therefore they sought the co-operation of other denominations that would make possible the attainment of the desired end. They were united in order to accomplish some things that were for their common welfare which each alone could not accomplish. They threw aside their theoretical or doctrinal differences for the attainment of practical ends that were for their mutual or common good. These common objectives united them. They did for the constituent denominations of those organizations what the war did for the various political

[1] *The Church at the Center*, pp. 71–78.

parties, locally and nationally. They were all united for the attainment of an object that was for their mutual welfare—the overthrow of a common enemy and the making safe of the nations and the world's future. The particular theories of each party were thrown aside for the attainment of these ends. The common, practical end desired united them. The same is true of the organizations mentioned before. An examination of the basis of their organization will show that it was not a theory or doctrine but a practical end to be attained.

Herein, then, is revealed the significance of the chapter on things that show a trend toward denominational unity.[1] The community church was mentioned as one of those organizations. The foregoing basis is the one upon which it primarily brings about the denominational unity found in it. Herein probably lies the thing of fundamental and primary importance in the community church and community-church movement. The primary factor in the basis of unity found in them is the attainment of concrete practical ends, objects, goals, which are for the general welfare. This needs to be added. While its basis of unity is the same as that upon which the unity of the other organizations referred to was formed, its method of organization differs. In the other organizations the constitutent bodies retain their identity. In the community church they lose it. In the former there is co-operation. In the latter there is absolute unity. Herein lies the larger significance of the community church as respects denominational unity over any of the other organizations that

[1] See chap. ii, p. 28.

show a trend in that direction. In it there is real unity, not merely co-operation or federation.

The element of economy is important respecting the subject under consideration. The unity of the denominations composing some of the community churches was brought about avowedly upon this basis.[1] Some of the larger church federations have recommended the establishment of such churches upon the ground that they make for economy. This factor has elsewhere been considered rather extensively. It only remains to emphasize here that it is a very important one as concerns denominational unity.

Community churches, furthermore, have partially brought about denominational unity upon the basis of efficiency. The church has had to face the present and growing demand for efficiency. That it has not measured up to this demand in a marked degree has brought it into severe criticism. Some of the community churches and some of the previously mentioned organizations that show a trend toward denominational unity were formed in order to meet this demand. This was an element that figured prominently in bringing the constituent denominations together. Separately they were not efficient. They saw that by uniting they could become so. It has been pointed out that the community churches are uniformly efficient, judged by ordinary standards. Efficiency, then, is a stone in the basic foundations upon which the community churches have brought about the unity found in them. It probably will be a primal factor in the basis of denominational unity as a whole.

[1] Home Mission Council of the State of Washington.

There is only one more factor to be mentioned here respecting how the community churches bring about denominational unity, viz., the practice of democracy. It has been shown before that these churches are not only democratic in theory, but that they are actually so in practice, and that this practice is basic with them and helps them to bring about the denominational unity found in them.[1]

How, then, do the community churches bring about the denominational unity found in them? To put it into a brief, concise, and comprehensive statement, they bring it about by (1) adapting themselves to meet the needs of the community in which they are located; (2) admitting into their membership persons from all denominations irrespective of the creed or polity of such denominations; (3) seeking to serve the whole life of the whole community and the whole life of all the people in it; (4) the practice of democracy; (5) performing such service economically and efficiently.

[1] See p. 78.

CHAPTER IX

THE METHOD AND BASIS OF UNITY FOUND IN THE COMMUNITY CHURCH ARE A PROBABLE METHOD AND BASIS FOR DENOMINATIONAL UNITY

It was said at the outset of this study that it would not consider all the new problems which confronted the church.[1] Here it may be said that not all those connected with the subject of this thesis have been considered. To have done so would have taken us too far afield. The final question that will be given consideration is: Does this newly evolving type of church show a method of approach to and a probable basis for denominational unity? What may be concluded in this respect?

The answer given to this question that is of such primary importance is based upon the evidence which this study produced. The conclusion is one that was reached upon discovered facts. It is that in this newly evolving type of church, a probable method of approach to and a basis for denominational unity is to be found. The bases for this conclusion follows.

It has been previously shown that the method of approach of the community churches to the problem they confront was scientific. They seek to get all the facts concerning a community and plan their course of action on the basis of those facts. This method makes denominational unity possible because it seeks to get all the facts that enter into the problem. It seeks to

[1] See p. 2.

study the situation in order to find out just what the conditions and needs are, so that a rational basis may be had upon which to formulate a course of action. The actual facts having been collected, classified, and systematized, they form a reliable basis upon which to formulate a conclusion as to a necessary course of procedure in order to meet the needs of the situation. No problem is ultimately solved until it is solved upon the basis of fact. This being so, only that method of approach to denominational unity which seeks the facts involved is a reliable and probable one for its solution. This is the method employed by the community church. It may therefore be concluded that this newly evolving type of church furnishes a probable and reliable method of approach to the problem of denominational unity.

A summary of the bases upon which the community church brought about the unity found in it has been presented.[1] They are likewise the probable bases for denominational unity as a whole. They are such because they make possible the mission of the various denominations and the church as a whole, viz., service which meets the needs of the situation locally, in the home field, in the foreign field—everywhere. To state it differently, they make possible the accomplishment of certain concrete and practical objectives, ends, and goals which are common to all the denominations and the church as a whole, and which no denomination can attain by itself. It was primarily upon these bases that the community churches brought about the unity found in them. It was by functioning so as to meet the needs of the community, by doing those things that were

[1] See chap. viii.

for the general welfare of the community, by undertaking to accomplish certain concrete and specific objectives, ends, and goals. It is upon this point that they focus attention. It is upon the basis of human welfare, both individual and social, for the people of the particular community in which the church is located, primarily, and, secondarily, for the people outside of that community. They united the various denominations found represented in them in order to attain definite and specific ends which were for their and the community's common welfare.

The various denominations likewise are coming to recognize that they all have many such ends in common. In fact they are beginning to realize that their aims, ends, and goals which are really vital and important are nearly all common. They are furthermore realizing that these can best be obtained by uniting their means and forces. This, then, is the probable basis upon which denominational unity will be brought about. The following is well to the point:

> Thus within Protestantism we are discovering that spiritual solidarity of which men have sung, but which has with great difficulty been put into operation. In other words, the present method is not of getting Protestant Christians to agree to doctrine, but of influencing them to co-operate in service. The way to get together is to work together.[1]

This basis of service—the attainment of certain specific objective ends and goals that are for the common welfare—which is found in the community churches is a probable basis for denominational unity because it allows for the most fundamental contention of Protes-

[1] Shailer Mathews, *Biblical World*, XLVI, 70.

tantism, viz., freedom of thought in respect to religious matters—creeds, dogmas, faiths.

These churches recognize that such differences do and necessarily must exist. They recognize the principle of freedom of thought, but they do also demonstrate that unity of action, and even organic unity, can exist where there is such freedom of thought and diversity of opinion. They are right in line with the principle of democracy, which allows freedom of thought, but which also results in unity of action. In a democracy each member may think for himself. All see that there are some things that are for the common welfare. They unite for the attainment of these ends which they have in common. They say: "There are some things that need to be done. They are for our common and general welfare. We are agreed upon them. Let us unite to accomplish these things. Each individual may still hold his own opinion, think as he pleases." In other words, the community churches have for their basis of unity the same principles that our government practices. In it there are various political parties. Each holds a different theory or doctrine of government. Individuals in these parties likewise hold these different theories. In some instances, in so far as they think for themselves, they may hold theories different from the party to which they belong. However, there are some things that concern the general welfare, some specific ends to be secured, some goals to be attained. There is unity among all as concerns these specific ends. All unite to attain them. There is a difference of opinion as to theory of government and as to method of attaining these concrete ends. There is freedom of thought.

But there is unity of action. The nation is one in this respect. The nation's action in our recent war is an illustration to the point. There was vast difference of opinion among people about the war in some respects, but there was absolute unity of action in order to attain the common welfare. This is the basis of unity found in community churches. They have practiced the principle of democracy. Democracy which allows freedom of thought and results in unity of action is one of the bases of the unity found in them. It promises well now to become the general practice among men. Therefore it may be further concluded that in community churches is probably to be found a basis for denominational unity.

Such churches furnish a basis for denominational unity, furthermore, because they make for economy. That they do so has been elsewhere sufficiently illustrated. They thus meet a great need that is recognized by the various denominations. One church in one community uniting all denominations into one body, which ministers to the needs of all the people to which a church should minister, makes for economy by eliminating duplication, overlapping, and competition. It makes for economy not only in the particular community, but for general economy. This demand is becoming general and insistent. Things that meet a general and insistent demand are usually made use of and adopted. For this reason also we may say that in the community churches is to be found a probable basis for denominational unity.

This fact in itself, that denominational unity is found in the community churches, goes far to establish

the conclusion that in this type of church is to be found a probable or possible basis for denominational unity. The scientific basis for a conclusion is fact. Fact also results in change of opinion. The fact that denominational unity actually exists in the community churches will result in a change of opinion regarding the denominational unity and the probable basis for it. As one has said: "The natural history of opinion is always a change of practice and then a change of opinion."[1]

It is likewise true that a change in opinion results in a change of practice. The importance of this study lies just at this point. It shows a change of practice on the part of the church. It shows that instead of philosophizing about religion it is beginning to practice it. It shows that the people are beginning to leave off theorizing and are beginning to act. This change of practice in respect to denominational unity will result in a change of opinion regarding it. This change of opinion will in turn result in the adoption of the practice which caused it. Therefore we may further conclude that in these churches is to be found a probable basis for denominational unity.

To summarize, it may finally be concluded from the foregoing study that in the community church is to be found a probable method of approach to and bases for denominational unity because: (1) Its method of approach is the scientific one. (2) Its bases of unity are: adaptation to the needs of the situation; the admission of representatives of all denominations irrespective of creed or polity to membership; the focusing of attention upon the attainment of certain

[1] Robert E. Park, letter of January 2, 1919.

specific objectives, ends, and goals that are the common aims of all the denominations and which are for the general welfare; making such attainment primary; the practice of democracy; economy and efficiency in functioning. Upon the basis of this scientific method of approach to, and these concrete practical bases of unity found in, the community churches, then, it may be reasonably concluded that denominational unity may be brought about, all the undesirable results of denominationalism may be eliminated, and a united church may fulfil its mission of service, such a service as will meet the needs for human welfare in every respect which the social situation presents; as will, in short, bring about the "Kingdom of God on earth."

APPENDIX A

LOCATION OF COMMUNITY CHURCHES[1]

Allentown, N.Y.
Alpine, Tenn.
Apanoosa, Ill.
Area, Ill.
Argyle, Iowa
Aston, Wis.
Ayers, Mass.
Beech, Iowa
Benzonia, Mich.
Blue Mounds, Kan.
Boston, Mass.
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Buckhorn, Ky.
Camp Upton, L.I.
Central Falls, R.I.
Chicago, Ill.
Cristobal, Panama (Canal Zone)
Claremont, Cal.
Cleveland, Ohio
Collegeport, Tex.
Columbus, Ohio
Culleoka, Okla.
Dallas, Tex.
Darley, N.Y.
Denver, Colo.
Derby, N.Y.
Des Moines, Iowa
Detroit, Mich.
Dublin, Ohio
Elmhurst, Ill.
Enterprise, Ore.
Fancy Creek, Mich.
Fargo, N.D.
Franklin, Ind.
Garrettsville, Ohio
Genesee, Idaho
Gibson City, Ill.
Gilbert, Iowa
Glover, Vt.
Greenfield, Mass.
Hanover, N.J.
Harlington, Tex.
Harmony, Mo.
Hiram, Ohio
Holyoke, Mass.
Honey Creek, Wis.
Huntsville, Ala.
Hydesville, Cal.
Irisburg, Mass.
Kaneville, Ill.
Kennewick, Wash.
Kimball, Neb.
Kinderbrook, N.Y.
La Grange, Wis.
Lakeville, Ohio
Leland, Ill.
Linary, Tenn.
Lincoln, Vt.
Little Britain, N.Y.

[1] This is not a complete list of community churches. For instance, Chicago has several such churches.

Little Pine, Ark.
Lombard, Ill.
McClellandtown, Pa.
Marion, Kan.
Marley, Ill.
Marseilles, Ill.
Minden, Iowa
Monroe, Wis.
Monroe Center, Ill.
Morgan Park, Minn.
Oakland, Cal.
Odessa, Wash.
Orange, Ohio
Park Ridge, Ill.
Pigeon Creek, Wis.
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Plainfield, Ill.
Pleasant Lake, Ind.
Providence, R.I.
Quincy, Mass.
Randolph, Vt.
Ravenswood, Mo.
Rockport, Mass.
Rollo, Ill.
Round Prairie, Kan.
Sandstone, Minn.
Sandwich, Ill.
Saxtons River, Vt.
Scio, Ore.
Scotia, Cal.
Sheridan, Ill.
Shopiere, Wash.
Sierra Madre, Cal.
Thurston County, Wash.
Toppenish, Wash.
Versailles, Ky.
Wabasha, Minn.
Wauconda, Ill.
Waupun, Wis.
Wellington, Colo.
West Fairlie, Vt.
Western Springs, Ill.
Westfield, Vt.
Wilboux, Mont.
Wilton Center, Ill.
Windsor, Wis.
Winnetka, Ill.
Winona, Mich.
Wixom, Mich.
Woodlawn, Tenn.

APPENDIX B

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INDEX

INDEX

Abstract doctrines, 32

Accomplishment, objective, 131

Activities: of community churches, 98; foreign missionary, 44; social, 88; variation in, 101

Adults, 104

Africa, 15

Agriculture, 87

Amateur plays, 104

America, 5, 6, 43, 49; Christian churches of, 47; rural communities of, 87; spiritual needs of, 46

American: colony, 97; population, 11; society, 1; Sunday School Union, 41

American Journal of Sociology: John L. Gillin, 38; E. C. Hayes, 26, 57, 67; Warren H. Wilson, 122

American Journal of Theology, Alfred Williams Anthony, 29

Amusement, 101, 102, 104

Anthony, Alfred Williams, 29, 36, 37, 97, 131

Army, 133; camp, 90

Arts and sciences, 29, 88

Ashton, Wisconsin, 84

Associate membership, 77, 78

Athletic: club, 94, 95; director, 70; teams, 102

Athletics, 106

Atlantic Monthly, February, 1918, 43

Attendance, 10; loss of, 23

Automobile, 86

Ayers, Massachusetts, 89

Babies, 107

Band, 71

Baptist, 8, 9, 10, 11, 35, 49, 64, 69, 70, 89, 126, 132

Baptist Church, 39

Barr, Norman B., 126

Barriers, 37

Baseball, 110

Basis: for denominational unity, 98, 134, 138, 142, 143; of service, 47; of theology, to unite the denominations, 47; of unity found in community welfare, 142, 143; of unity of community churches, 141; probable, 140; rational, 139

Basket-ball, 70, 95

Battlefields of Europe, 35, 36

Bazars, 106

Beach, Iowa, 125

"Beautifying the Home Farm," 84

Beliefs, 43

Benevolences, 100

Benevolent contribution, 101

Bible: readings, 96, 102; school, 117

Biblical World, Shailer Mathews, 29, 45, 48, 140

Bibliothaca Sacra: Fred W. Palmer, 10; George Frederick Wells, 56

Billiard rooms, 110

Blair, Nebraska, 10

Border line, 82; case, 90; churches, 84, 96; group, 80

Bowling alley, 89

Boy Scout, 70, 94, 95, 102, 108

Boys: club, 116; social and recreational activities for, 70

Bread, 88

Brotherhood, 103; club, 110; plea for, 45

Brotherly love, 99
Bryn Mawr Community Church, Chicago, 64
Budget, 105
Burr, Walter, 86
Business men, 34, 35, 78

Cabildo, 91
Camp: activities, 102; Devons, 90; Fire, 95
Camp Fire Girls, 94, 108, 115
Cantonment, 89
Capital, 29
Catholic, 6, 37, 42, 69, 78, 82, 84, 126; membership, 19; seating capacity of churches, 19, 33
Cemetery, 84
Centenary Missionary Conference, 45
Center: of religious life, 86; social, 100
Centripetal forces, 28
Century Magazine, 56
Ceremony, 39
Change, social, 121
Chapel, cross-roads, 67
Chaplains, 35
Charity, 38
Chicago, 10, 69; Church Federation Council, 27; Lincoln Center, 26; Olivet Institute, 30, 71, 82
Children, 108
China, 45
Choir, 71
Choral Club, 71
Christ, 121
Christian Advocate, November 6, 1913, 72
Christian: brotherhood, 99; center, 90; Church, 120, 121; Church of America, the essential oneness of, 47; citizenship, 108; community, 55; forces, 39; message, 100; spirit, growth in, 99; unity, 39, 45
Christian Century: W. W. Church, 72; J. Mack Mills, 77; W. S. Pritchard, 57; W. B. Zimmerman, 125
Christian Science, 64
Christian Union Quarterly, Charles S. McFarland, 22, 45
Christians, 7, 43, 49, 57
Christmas, 106
Church, 1, 2, 7, 12, 27, 33, 38, 67, 89, 99, 100, 128, 138, 139, 143; an inconsiderate factor, 69; central, 70; country, 112; decadent condition of, 64; duplication, 50; federation, 130, 136; function of, 86; independent, 122; membership, 19; mission of, 31, 69; new type of, 54, 55; of one faith, 5; publicity, 106; rivalry, 72; united, 144
Church at the Center, The, Warren H. Wilson, 59
Church Federation in Terms of Fraternity, Democracy, and Altruism, Alfred W. Anthony, 37
Church of Christ, 76
Church of the Brethren, Waterloo, Iowa, 30
Church of the Messianic Message, 7
Church of the Open Country, The, Warren H. Wilson, 59
Church, W. W., 72
Churches, 9, 11, 44; abandoned, 11, 12; competing, 12, 23; dead, 21; dying, 11, 12; overlapping of, 13; pastorless, 15; superfluous, 13
Citizenship class, 95
City, 24, 36, 100; beauty of, 100; communities, 24, 72
Civic centers, 91
Claremont, 123
Clinic, ear, nose, and throat, dental, 94, 96

Club: boys', 116; brotherhood, 110; handicraft, 116; Italian, 115; mother's, 110, 116; women's, 116

Clubrooms, 111

Cole, Charles, L., 99, 103, 104

College of Agriculture, 84

College students, 43

Collegeport, Texas, 74, 125

Comedy, 107

Comity, 16, 64, 84; committee on, 49; to promote practice of, 50

Commission for a World Conference on Faith and Order, 48

Committee on: Church Cooperation, and Unity, 49; Comity, Federation and Unity, 49; Health, 71; Rural Life, 30; State and Local Federation, 97

Common: end, 99, 103; good, 134; objective, 134; tasks, 43; welfare, 42

Communicants, 9

Community: attitude, 81; budget, 104; building, 99, 103, 104; center, 87, 105; central in every interest, 67; defined, 58, 59; functioning, 59; health, 102; house, 70, 88, 108, 110; overchurched, 60; planning, 88, 89; program, 93; religion, 87; school, 88; service, 104, 134; social and spiritual salvation of, 86; spirit and program, 90; welfare, 70, 102, 132

Community Cathedral Church, 56

Community Church, 1, 2, 30, 34, 38, 49, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 62, 64, 65, 69, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 88, 91, 102, 103, 105, 107, 113, 121, 124, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 135, 139, 140, 141, 143; activities, 31, 34, 113, 131, general, 99, 100, 101, specific, 101, 102, 105; brings about denominational unity, 131, 132, 134, 137; by-laws, 130; center of life of community, 71; classified, 80; constitutions, 130; definition of, 55, 58, 59, 60, 79, 90; denominational, 122, 130, 142, 143; doctrine and creeds, 76; federated, 81; function of, 60, 61, 62; fundamental characteristics, 62, 78; fundamental objectives, 73; fundamental principles, 75, 77; illustrations, 66, 67, 69; increasing, 51; mission of, 65; new, 78, 80; pastors of, 59; polity, 80; prevents overlapping, duplication of service, material equipment, and expenditure for maintenance, 73; program, 59; purposes of, 61; rural, 62; serves whole community, 63, 72; types of, 81, 97, 130, 137; uniformity, 101; variety among them, 80, 101; welfare, 16, 21, 50

Community House, Winnetka, Illinois, 108

Community Study for Country Districts, Anna B. Taft, 7

Competing institutions, 72

Competition, 46, 142; denominational, 72; unregulated, 28, 30

Concerts, 71

Conclusion, 138

Conditions, 100

Conferences, church, 2

Congestion, 93

Congregational, 10, 11, 43, 64; polity, 51

Congregational Church, 133

Congregational Community Church, 30, 76, 78, 81; activities of, 107

Congregationalist and Advance, 90

Congregationalists, 35, 89, 126

Consciences, 77

Constructive Quarterly, Kirshner, 32

Consultation, 46

Contention, 9

Continent, 5

Cooking, 94, 95
Co-operation, 29, 30, 39, 44, 46, 47, 49, 56, 72, 88, 90, 97, 106, 133, 134, 135, 136; community, 71; efficient, 46; interchurch and interdenominational demand for, 45; trend toward, 84
Co-operative organization, 1
Cottage prayer meeting, 96
Country Church and the Rural Problem, The, Kenyon L. Butterfield, 22
Country Community, 122; Church, 8, 24, 25, 100, 105; Club, 106
Cowan, John F., 74
Cowgill, Missouri, 8
Creedal test, 76, 130
Creeds, 39, 51, 76, 77, 78, 108, 120, 126, 130, 141
Creoles, 93
Cubans, 93
Curtis, W. C., 72

Daily News Almanac and Year Book (1918), 42
Day of the Country Church, The, J. O. Ashenhurst, 16
Deaconesses, 91
Democracy, 67, 137, 141, 142; practice of, 143
Democratic, 78, 79; government, 100
Denominational: affiliation, 81; barriers, 37, 43; changing, 51; channels, 91; church, 91; differences, 31, 51, 66; fold, 100; groups, 44; loyalty, 51; overlapping and overlooking, 15, 28; prejudice, 41; rivalry, 23; situation, 2, 5; stubbornness or factions, 13; waste, 28
Denominational unity, 1, 2, 3, 37, 48, 126, 128, 129, 130, 132, 137; basis for, 134; fundamental principle of, 74, 75; movement toward, 128; practice of, 122, 123; practiced by community churches (illustrations), 122, 123, 124, 125; probable method of, 3; trend toward, causes, 28, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51, 53, 97, 98, 102, 134, 135, 136
Denominationalism, 5, 6, 15, 16, 19, 33, 53, 123, 144; little care for, 50; result of, 7, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 34, 53; shield of, 13
Denominations, 5, 6; minor, 7; Protestant, 42; Protestant evangelical, 47
Destitution, 46
Detachment, 100
Deterioration, 46
Devotional services, 101
Differences: doctrinal, 134; theoretical, 134
Dignity, 89
Disciples, 126
Disciples of Christ, 8, 14, 43, 49, 64
Dissipations, 22
Disunion, 27
Diversity, 67
Divided church, 6, 7, 28; fields, 12
Division, 5, 27, 46, 134; denominational, 6; results, 6
Divorce, increase of, 1
Doctor, the, 70
Doctrinal test, 76; interests, 31
Doctrine, 140; of religious unity, 33
Dogma and doctrine, 31, 33, 34, 47
Dogmas, 126, 141
Domestic servants, 108
Dramatics, 106, 107; club, 108
Dunkards, 86
Du Page Presbyterian Church, 82, 103
Duplication, 50; administrative, 48; of equipment, 44

Ecclesiastical machinery, 33
Economic expediency, 72; waste, 72
Economy, 13, 73, 97, 142, 143; demand for, 72; in men, 73; lack of, 19, 29
Edinburgh Conference on World Missions, 45
Education, 100, 111
Efficiency, 13, 29, 70, 73, 89, 97, 136, 143
Efficient, socially, 99
Effusionists, 51
Elder, 56
Employment, 71
England, 5
English, 93, 96
Entertainment, 101, 102, 106, 116
Episcopal Church, 9, 10, 13, 48, 49
Episcopalians, 35, 49, 126
Essentials, 38; of Christian faith, 89
Europe, battlefields of, 35
Evangelical: Christianity, 30, 75; church, 77; denominations, 75, 78
Evangelism, 103
Expenditure of men and money, 44
Extension lecture service, 104
Extermination, 29
Extra community, 90
Extravagance, 20

Facts, only sure foundation, 62
Fairview, Pennsylvania, 13
Faith, 33; denominational, 60; distinctions of, 35
Faiths, 141
Fall festivals, 106
Farm co-operation, 104
Farmers, 105, 106; club, 104; co-operative organization among, 1, 34; institute, 35, 66
Farmsteads, 84
Federal idea, 33
Federated church, 69; Marion, Kansas, 72; movements, 44
Federation, 16, 44, 45, 69, 72, 97, 136; city, township, and group, 50; home mission fields, 47; of churches, 36, 136; overchurched fields, 47
Fellowship, 76, 107; interdenominational, 48
Fidelity to community spirit, 60
First Church of Collegeport, Texas, 74
First United Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 61
Folly, 89
Forces, centripetal, 28
Foreigners, 14, 69
Foreign field, 45; sections, 101
Foresight, 89
Form, 39
Fourth of July, 66, 106
Fourth Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 81
Fraternity, 123
Freedom, of expression, 5; of thought, 141
French, 91; quarter, 91
"Friendly relations," 70
Friendship Circle, 108

Galpin, C. J., 86, 103
Game rooms, 115
Gasoline engines, 84
General: activities, 99, 101; clinic, 94, 96; Conferences, 44; Council, 44; Synod, 44; welfare, 70, 79, 99, 132
German, 5; Baptists, 86
Gill, C. O., 35, 61, 77
Gillin, John L., 38, 66
Gladden, Washington, 39, 55
God, 88, 122; glory of, 75; Kingdom of, 144

Gray, Thomas, 61, 133
Greater Parish of Benzonia, Michigan, 103
Green, C. R., 69
Group welfare, 99, 101
Groups, denominational, 44
Guild, Roy B., 43, 133
Gymnasium, 110; girls', 115

Handicraft club, 116
Harlan, Rolvyx, 57
Harmony, 124
Hayes, E. C., 57, 63
Head resident, 95
Health, 71, 104
Hersey, Lieutenant Harold, 35
Hired: girls, 67; man, 67
History, 107
Home, 57; nursing, 94, 95
Home Department of the Board of Missions, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 91
Home Mission Boards, 16; work, 46
Home Missionary Council, 16
Home Missions Council, 46, 49, 50; of the State of Washington, 57, 64, 136
Homiletic Review, January, 1919, 44; John F. Cowan, 69
Hospital patients, 96
Household economics, 102
Houses, tenement, boarding, rooming, small apartment, 93
Huguenots, 5
Human: brotherhood, 37; touch, 90
Humanity, 43
Humidity, 93
Hungarians, 113
Hurricane Community Church, 61, 81, 131
Hut, 43

Idaho, 14
Ideals, 93
Illustrated lectures, 71
Immersion, 39
Immersionist denominations, 51
Imperial, 33
Impoverishment, 89
Independent, Albert J. Kennedy, 11
Indifference, 69
Individual, 133; church supremacy, 9; saving the, 100; spiritual and social salvation of the, 86
Industrial: community, 101; prosperity, 100
Industry democratization of, 1
Inefficiency, 21, 24, 28, 97; of city churches, 25; religious, 22
Infant mortality, 102
Interchurch co-operation, 35
Interchurch Worker's Conference, Chicago, 37
Interchurch World Movement of North America, 121
Interdenominational: fellowship, 48; missionary boards, 21
Interests: civic, 70; health, educational, and recreational, 70; of economy, unity, the glory of God, the greater good of mankind, 47; promoting common, 43; religious, 88
Internationalism, 1
Inter-War Work Activities Fund, The, 37
Introduction to Rural Sociology, Paul L. Vogt, 99
Irreligion, 30
Italian club, 115
Italians, 91, 93, 96, 113

Jacobite Church, 7
Jehovah Conference, 6
Jensen, Howard E., 31, 48, 99
Jesus Christ, 13, 33, 42, 47, 55, 123, 126; follower of, 60

Jewish welfare worker, 43
Jews, 78, 82
Juanita County, Pennsylvania, 7
Judgment day, 31
Juvenile delinquency, 102

Kansas City, 43
Kansas: Dover, 8; county seat town, 10
Kindergarten, 115
King, Irving, 100, 106
Kingdom of God, 60, 65, 69, 144; of Heaven, establishment of, 46
Kipling, 133
Kitchen garden, 95

Labor, 29, 35; hours, 100
Laborers, 113
Ladies' Home Journal: David Littell, 25; Ethelbert Talbot, 121, 129
Laity, the, 33, 51
Lane County, Oregon, Survey, 11, 17, 23, 65
Language study, 102
Layman, 39
Laymen's Missionary Movement, 43
Leadership, 88
Lectures, 84, 104
Lee Land Company, 87, 88
Leeland, 89
Leeland Community Plan, The, Earl Marion Todd, 89
Leveling forces, 28
Liberty, spiritual, 5, 38
Library, 88, 104; public, 71
Life, the more abundant, 91
"Limping country church," 105
Lincoln Center, 26
Literary societies, 106
"Loop" in Chicago, 82, 107
Lutheran, Evangelical (Association), 13, 44
Lutherans, 64, 126

McAfee, J. E., 60, 101
McComas, Henry C., 31
McFarland, Charles S., 45
McNutt, Matthew Brown, 62
Magazine and book exchange, 71
Major groups, 6
Manual of the United Church of Garrettsville, Ohio, 39, 75
Manual training, 115
Marginal man, the, 67
Marion, Kansas, 72
Marketing, 87
Masonic order, 33
Massachusetts, 59, 74; Federation of Churches, 17, 75
Material welfare, 99; environment, 99
Mathews, Shailer, 29, 30, 44, 48
Membership: less than one hundred, 11; net loss, 23; gain, 23
Memorial Day, 106
Men and Missions, 48, 59
Mennonites, 86
Men's Brotherhood, 108; building, 96
Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 8, 44, 93
Methodist Protestant, 44, 132
Methodists, 9, 10, 11, 13, 51, 64, 69, 89, 136
Middle West, 12
Mills, Harlow S., 61
Mills, J. Mack, 77
Ministers, shortage of, 47
Minneapolis, Minn., 20
Minor groups, 6
Mission Boards, 11; churches, 71
Missionary appropriations, 20
Missionary Review, Philip Smead Bird, 124

Missionary Societies, 9; club, 94; funds, 46
Mississippi River, 93
Missouri, Cowgill, 8
Modern heating plants, 84
Modern Methods in the Country Church, Matthew Brown McNutt, 62
Morse, Ayers and, 65
Mothers' Club, 110, 116
Movement: for federation and unity, 45; for profit sharing, 1; for religious, social and civic betterment, 50; social, 54
Moving pictures, 102, 104, 106
Municipal Church, 55, 56
Municipality, 58
Music, 71, 86, 88
Musical education, 101
Musicals, 71

Nation, 47
National Conference of Social Work, 43
National Conference for Social Work, Roy B. Guild, 133
National League for Wholesome Motion Pictures, 107
Nationality, 108
Needs: economic, educational, recreational, religious, social, aesthetic and hygienic, 87; of the community, 107; social, 107
"Neglected field surveys," 15
Negroes, 93
Neighborhood, 87; club, 108
New Orleans, La., 90
New York, state of, 9, 48
Norm, 129
Nursery, 106

Oak Mound Congregational Church, 82
Objectives, 90, 91, 144; accomplishment of, 131
Ohio, 15, 16, 77
Old Testament, 42
Olivet Institute, 82
Olivet Institute, 63, 113, 114, 115, 125; activities, 113, 115, 116, 117, 119; community, 113, 117; educational department, 115; relief department, 116; religious department, 117
One-church towns, 19
Open Country, 7, 81, 82, 105
Orange Township, 66
Orchestra, 110
Oregon, Lane County, Survey, 11, 17
Organic Union, 44, 120
Organization, ecclesiastical, 44
"Other worldly" points of view, 131
Outside aid, 19
Overchurching, 7, 11, 12, 18, 25; in California, 9; New York state, 9; of small towns, 9; results of, 17, 18; widespread, 13
Over-cultivated, 15
Overlapping, 7, 8, 10, 13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 27, 45, 47, 50, 64, 72, 73, 97, 125, 127, 142; in Massachusetts, 8, 12; of territory, 48

Pagan, 7
Paid workers, 114
Panama, 97
Parish, 86; house, 71; priest, 84
"Parish Church," 56
Parishes, struggling, 73
Park, Robert E., 131, 143
Parsonage, 86
Parties, 106
Part-time: ministers, 18; services, 15
Patriotism, 107
Paul, 33

Pennsylvania, 23, 66
Personal salvation, 31, 99
Philadelphia Conference, 121
Philosophy of religion, 130
Physicians, 104
Piano, 84, 86
Pilgrims, 5
Pipe organ, 104
Pitman, H. H., 105, 106
Playground, 94
Plays, amateur, 104
Point of view: "other worldly," 30, 31, 131, "this worldly," 30, 31, 131
Policy, 47
Polity, 51, 126, 130, 131
Polyglot population, 93
Pontalba Flats, 91
Population: American, 11; organization of, 1; rural, 14
Practical ends, 134, 135
Practices, 43, 120, 130
Preaching, 101; services, 106, 108
Presbyterian Board of Missions, 60, 101
Presbyterian Church, 120
Presbyterians, 8, 13, 35, 43, 49, 64, 89, 120, 132
Press, religious, 39
Priest, 42; parish, 84
Principles: fundamental, 5; of Christianity, 88
Principles of Sociology, Albion W. Small, 31
Pritchard, W. S., 57
Probable basis for denominational unity, 140
Problems: common, 70; discussion of economic, civil, and social, 100; overlapping, overlooking, inefficiency, economic waste, 57; world, 47
Proceedings of the American Sociological Society, C. O. Gill, 15
Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work, Arthur J. Todd, 23
Prodigality, 22
Production, 87; of wealth, and men, 87; of women, 88
Programs: constructive, 2; evangelistic, 103; Sunday evening, 106; world, 121
Prohibition movement, 102
Protection of children and youth, 100
Protestant, 6, 37; churches, 51; denominations, 42; groups, 6; membership, 19; ministers, 43; seating capacity, 19
Protestant bodies: need of reformation of, 26; unregulated competition of, 16
Protestantism, 34, 140; centrifrugal forces of, 27, 28; Christian, 90, 97; divided, 7; imbecility of, 26
Psychology of Religious Sects, Henry C. McComas, 28
Public: health, 100; recreation, 100
Puritan, 5
Purpose, unity of, 69

Quaker Hill, 122
Quakers, 5, 64

Railroad, 71, 78
Reading-room, 71, 104
Realignment of the churches, 47
Reasoning, 63; prior, 63
Recent war, 1, 35, 89
Recreation, 108
Recreational: facilities, 88; life, 101, 104
Rectory, 84
Red Cross, 110; relief work, 102
Reformation, 121
Refreshments, 106

Regions, neglected, 14
Religion, 33, 34, 62, 87, 88; modern, 99; on a side street, 69; philosophy of, 130; social conception of, 99.
Religious: center, 123; culture, 100; destitution, 14; education, 11; forces, 88; interests, 88; life, 88; press, 39; sanctions, 5; sanity, 33; shibboleths, 35; the distinctly, 106; unity, 34, 42, 43
Religious Education, Irving King, 100
Resident pastors, 15
Residential section, 101
Rituals, 39
Rivalries, 89
River Brethren, 87
Road-making, 69, 102, 104
Robe of Christ, 7
Rockefeller, Mr., 39
Rollo Community Church, 105
Root Talmage, E., 50
Rural: activities, 103; church building, 87; church center, 89; church movement, 72; community, 7, 24, 66, 87, 101; districts, 15, 42; life, 30; regions neglected, 14; schools, 104; sections, 12
Rural churches: co-operation and federation of, 72; economy of, 84; general welfare of, 100
Rural Manhood, 9, 87; Ernest W. Burgess, 10; E. R. Groves, 66; Roy B. Guild, 10
Rural Problems of Today, Ernest B. Groves, 34

Sacrilege, 69
St. Louis Cathedral, 91
St. Mark's Hall, 93; schedule, 93, 96
St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 90
Salaries, 17; ministers', 18, 20
San Francisco, 14
Salvation, 72; individual, 1, 132; personal, 31; social, 132
Sanitation, 71, 104
Scandinavian, 5
School, 84, 88; building, 84
Schools, 57
Scientific: agriculture, 84; farming, 69, 104; method, 64
Scientists, 63
Scribner's, August, 1918, 35
Secretaries, Y.M.C.A., 35
Sectarian: competition, 89; contention, 9; division, 89
Sectarianism, 22, 33, 46, 75, 88, 103
Sectarians, 104
Section hand, 78
Sects, 7, 84, 86, 89
Secular, 106
Secular press, 39
Self-supporting, 9
Sermon on the Mount, 126
Servant girl, 78
Serve: all the people, 130; the whole community, 130
Service, 33, 34, 42, 43, 126, 130; to whole community, 91, 96, 130
Sewing class, 94, 95, 115, 116
Shibboleth, 38
Short course, 106
Shower baths, 89, 95
Sierra, California, 125
Silos, 84
Sicilians, 113
Sleeping rooms, 89
Small, Albion W., 31
Social: activities, 88; adaptability, 2; betterment, 30, 32, 102; center, 104; change, 121; conception of church's mission, 31; forces, 88, 99; group, 100; ideal, 69; inefficiency, 8; institutions, 54; intercourse, 88;

life, 69, 87; movement, 54; reformation, 32; revolution, 1; righteousness, 37; salvation, 1, 31, 32; settlements, 26, 93; situation existing, 1, 2; welfare, 99
Social and program hour, 107
Social Ideals and Unity of Religious Forces, Howard E. Jensen, 32, 48, 99
Social process, the, 31
Social service, 99, 102; center, 100
Socials, 106
Society: American, 1; detached, 99; human, 54
Soldiers, 35, 36, 90; pagan Roman, 7
South, the, 12, 93
Spanish, 91, 93, 96
Special meetings, 106
Spirit: of Christ, 100; of unity, 35, 36, 42
Spiritual needs, 69, 91; solidarity, 140
Stables, 93
Standard of living, 100
State federations, 21; of churches, 49; Maine, Ohio, California, and Massachusetts, 50
Statement of Principles, Home Mission Council, Western Washington, 49, 50
Struggle, for individual church supremacy, 9
Struggling churches, 74
Student Volunteer Movement of the United States and Canada, 43
Subdivisions, minor, 6
Suburban communities, 107
Suggestions for State and Local Federation, Alfred Williams Anthony, 131
Sunday schools, 41, 42, 74, 96, 101, 104, 106
Supply Store, 94
Survey, Charles Cole, 99
Survey of Lane County, Oregon, Ayers and Morse, 12, 65
Survey of Windsor County, Ohio, C. O. Gill, 23
Surveys, 7, 49, 61, 63; Lane County, Oregon, 11, 17; state, 46; Windsor County, Ohio, 23

Tabernacle, 89
Talbot, Ethelbert, 121, 129
Teachers, 106; Institute, 67
Team play, 133, 134
Telephone, 87
Temporary building, 90
Tent, 90
Test, credal, 130
Theology, 123
Theoretical differences, 134
Thrift, 47
Todd, Earl Marion, 89
Tolerance, 27
Toleration, 38
Topeka, Kansas, 49
Tourist resort, 69
Town: large, 12; of Sheridan, Illinois, 82; one-church and three-church, 19
Township: center, 107; school, 105
Townships, 11, 58
Traditional momentum, 33
Tragedy, 107
Tramp, 67
Tuberculosis, 104
Types, 44, 98; of open country churches, 82; of large-city churches, 82; of village and small-town churches, 82
Types of Rural Churches, C. J. Galpin, 103

Underliving wage, 18
Undivided services, 15

Unification of religious work, 21
Union, 104; organic, 120
Union Community Church, 81
Unitarian, 89
Unite, the call to, 47
United Christendom, 49
United Christianity, 76
United Lutheran Church in America, 44
United Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, 64
United Society of Christian Endeavor, 43
United States, 97; Catholics in, 84; Home Mission Boards and Societies in, 46
United Synod, South, 44
Unity, 1, 3, 27, 34, 38, 43, 45, 46, 67, 84, 87, 88, 128, 129, 132, 133, 135, 136; Christian, 29, 39; denominational, 1, 2, 3, 28, 37, 48, 126, 129, 132, 133, 135, 136; in religious administration, 87; of action, 141, 142; of life and action, 47, 50; organic, 141; practical Christian, 124; problem of, 2; religious, 122; spirit of, 35, 36, 42; working, 19, 28
Universalist, 9
Unoccupied fields, 47
Urbanization of population, 1

Vaccinations, 95, 96
Variation in communities, 101
Vaudeville, 104
Ventilation, 93
Vieux Carré, 91
Village, 8, 9, 58, 103; church, 61
Vision, 69; nation-wide, and a world-wide, 47
Visiting nurse, 110
Vitality, low, 93
Vocational activities, 102
Vogt, Paul L., 99
Volley ball, 110
Volunteer workers, 114

Waidle, A. W., 90
War, the, 1, 35, 36, 37, 110, 133
Washington, 16
Washington Park Community Church, 82
Waste, 27, 28, 64; economic, 72; elimination of, 16, 21, 29; of finer emotion, 22; of money, 45, 64, 73; of money and man power, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 64, 73; of moral power, 22; of power, 16; of religious enthusiasm, 22; prevention of, 46; to the mission boards, 19
Waterloo, Iowa, 66, 73
Waterworks, 84
Wauconda Community Church, 81
Wauconda, Illinois, 69, 71
Weather vanes, 82
Welfare, 70, 86, 100; common, 134, 140, 141, 142; community, 142, 143; general, 131, 135, 140, 141, 143; human, 140, 144; social, 133; social group, 99; social physical, 61
Well being, man's, 62
Wells, George Frederick, 72, 73
Western Washington Home Mission Council, 49
Whole community, 101
Willett, Herbert L., 37
Wilson, Warren H., 34, 122, 124
Wind mills, 84
Windsor County, Ohio, 23
Winnetka, Illinois, 76, 81, 107, 125
Wisconsin University Bulletin, C. J. Galpin, 86
Woman's Missionary Council, 91, 93
Women's club, 116

Women's Missionary Society, 108
Woodlawn Baptist Church, 82
Woodwork, 95; Club, 95
Workers: paid, 114; volunteer, 114
World: builders, 104; program, 121

Year Book and Directory of Members, 76
Yearbook of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 5, 6, 47, 48
Y.M.C.A., 33, 35, 42, 90
Young Men's Club, 106
Young people's meetings, 102, 104
Youths, 108

Zenos, Andrew C., 63
Zimmerman, W. B., 125

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